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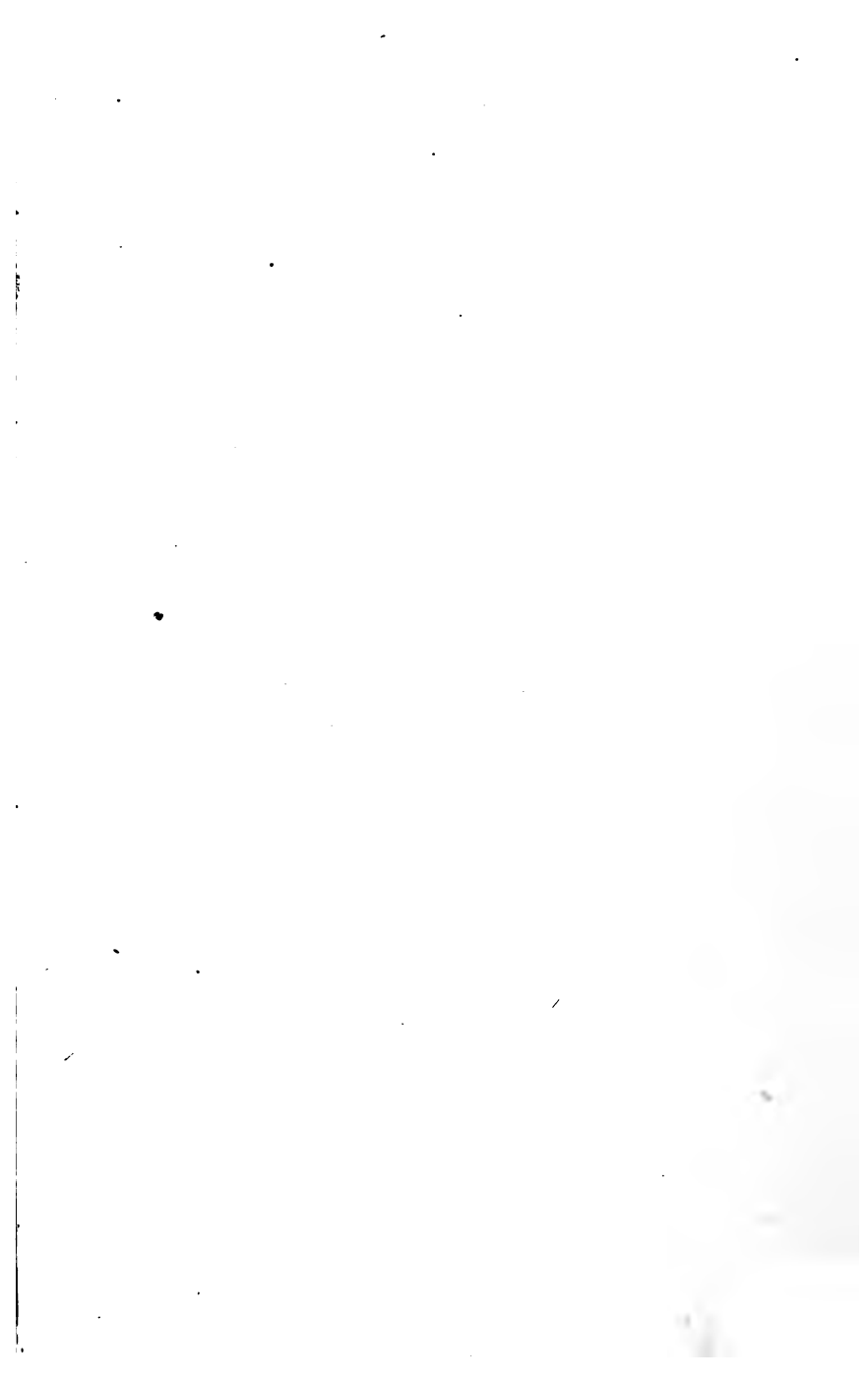


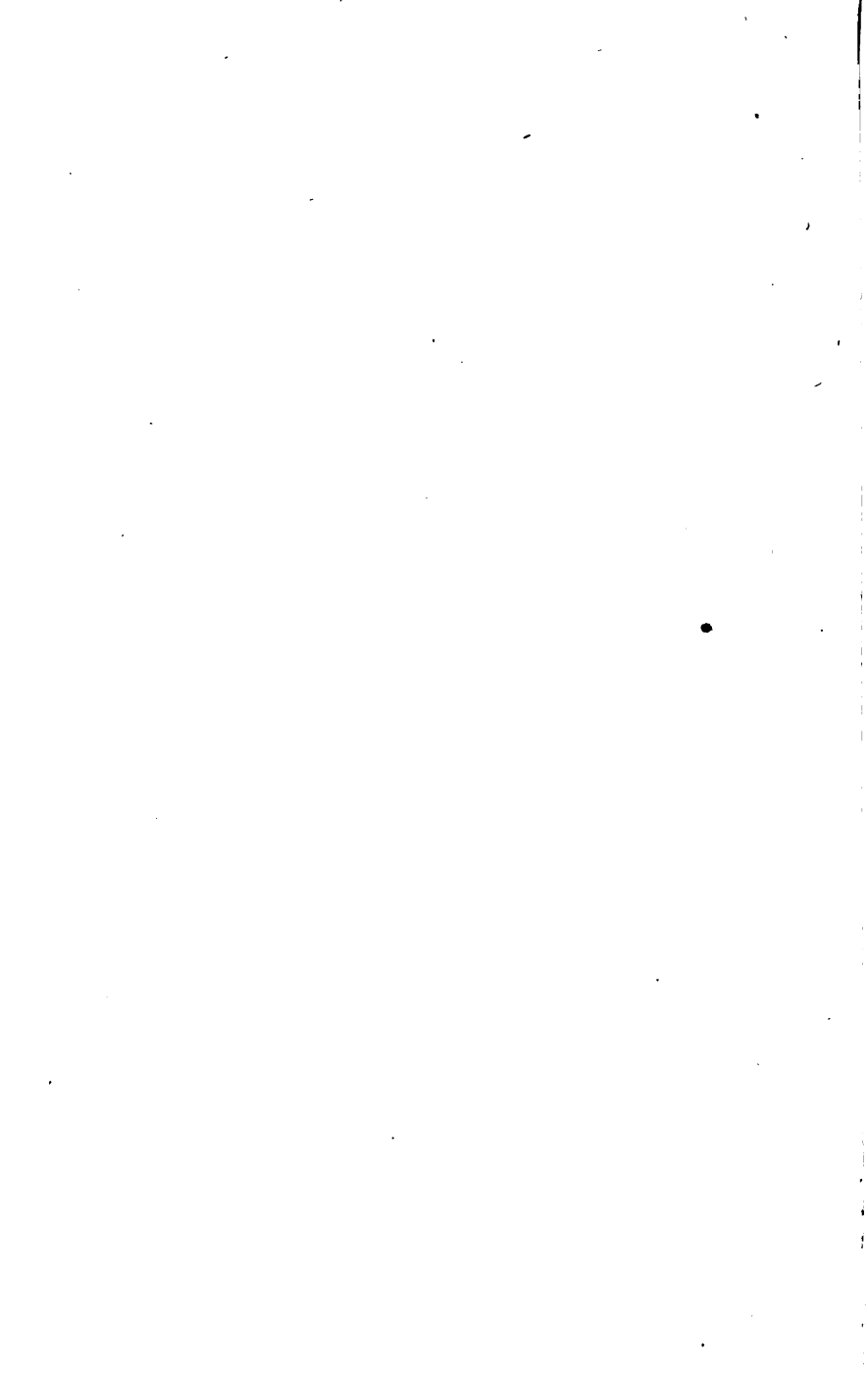
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# THE AGES TO COME;

OR,

## THE FUTURE STATES.

BY

E. ADKINS, D.D.

"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace by his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."—EPH. ii. 7.



NEW YORK:  
THE AUTHORS' PUBLISHING COMPANY,  
1880.

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## PREFACE.

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THE following work is designed as a compendious view of the whole subject of Eschatology. Of course, the survey of a subject so extensive, and upon which so much has been written, must be comparatively brief in a book of this size. But no important matter has been omitted or slighted. It has been a careful endeavor to secure brevity, not by omission, but by compression, and to give every subordinate topic its due place and consideration, and set it in as clear light as its nature will admit.

The subject invites our attention to conditions of being beyond the confines of our present state, of which, therefore, we can have no certain knowledge except what is communicated by divine revelation. It has been my sole object, in these inquiries, to find out what is revealed. This object demanded earnest, faithful, persevering study of the *language* of inspiration, in order to apprehend it not only in its literal sense, but in its other modes and methods of communication, by types, figures, symbols, and analogies. Such studies furnished some new clews to guide my inquiries; and they conducted me to some new conclusions—at least they were new to me. These clews and conclusions characterize the whole work, presenting various parts of the subject in new, and, it is thought, clearer points of view. All mere speculation has been avoided, and no inferences have been admitted but such as are logically necessary.

From the nature of the subject, occasional quotations from the Scriptures in the original languages have been necessary; and, in a few instances, passages have been cited from the Greek Classics, and from the Christian Fathers. These, it is believed,

are made plain to the common reader by translation, or by the drift of the context.

The work was finished, and ready for the press, nearly in its present form, over three years ago. But, from various causes and reasons, the publication has been delayed till now. In the meantime, several books have appeared, and the periodical press has teemed with essays and articles on various themes embraced in this general subject. These productions, as far as they have come to my knowledge, have received all due attention. Some of them evince studious thought and candid inquiry. Some are superficial and visionary. There is nothing in any of them to effect a change in my views. The ideas and theories of these writers have been mostly anticipated in this work. A revision with direct reference to them would require little addition or modification.

If my book finds readers, it must, of course, from the nature and number of the topics it discusses, encounter many diversities of opinion, and come into conflict with some chronic prejudices. I only ask for it a candid, considerate perusal. Just in the degree in which it may serve to expose and dispel error and contribute to a better understanding of revealed truth, my purpose in writing will be accomplished and my ardent desire satisfied.

E. A.

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## INTRODUCTION.

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IN the beginning of conscious thought, we find ourselves occupying the points in time and space called *here* and *now*, with little if any idea of duration, expansion, or succession. From the position of objects around us we soon acquire the ideas of the *near* and the *remote*; and the succession of events, marking the lapse of time, suggests the ideas of the *heretofore* and the *hereafter*. As the senses become trained to intelligent exercise, experience and observation continue to furnish clues by which our thoughts are conducted backward and forward in time and abroad in space, farther and farther, till we find and feel that we sustain necessary relations to the infinite. And though our minds cannot comprehend the infinite, yet neither can the utmost extent of the finite limit or circumscribe the range of our minds. Whether we contemplate time or space, we can no more fix upon a bound than we can comprehend the boundless. However remote the point or the line which is arrived at, thought will pause but for a moment and then go forward. This progression of thought, however it may be assisted by education and culture, seems to be natural and necessary from the constitution of the mind itself. And thus infinitude, though incomprehensible, is an object of our intuition; and our relations to the infinite are impressed



upon our consciousness. There is no mysticism, though perhaps some figure, in saying we *feel* that mysterious lines of relation connect us with every point of time and space, conveying impressions which awaken in us an interest in the events of all time, and the objects in all space.

With special regard now to time : The present is only a minute link in the chain of infinite duration, It is the link which connects the past with the future, both these extending from it, but in opposite directions, *ad infinitum*. It maintains forever its relative position in the midst of the ages, and yet is never at rest. It is a point of constant transition, ever changing, yet ever characteristically the same. It has travelled through all the ages of the past ; it will advance into all the ages of the future. Infinitely minute and transitory as it is, it is the point of conscious existence in which the men of all generations, successively, " live, move, and have their being." As denizens of earth, others have occupied it before us ; we occupy it for a few years, and then leave it to our successors.

No wonder that this fleeting point of time engages our special attention and interest. It comprehends all that to sense and perception is actual and real. The past has been, but is gone ; the future will be, but is yet to come. Memory and anticipation bring them before us as clusters and successions of shadows and images. But only the present has to show what is here and now at hand, and holds up to our view real, visible, tangible objects. But for this very reason we are disposed to bestow upon it more consideration than it deserves. Though it is entitled to peculiar regard, yet our interests are not,

nor can we feel they are, limited to that point of time, nor to any period which we may assume as the present, even though it be extended to the present life. There are active powers within us which are ever busy with the past and the future, and which no limits of time can confine. Memory repeats and, with the aid of imagination, reproduces the past. But the mind rests not at the confines of memory, but follows onward and downward through all the historic period, and into the shadowy ages of the unrecorded and the unknown. And hope and fear, incited by the desire of immortality, lead onward and upward into the ages of the eternal future. We feel that forces and influences operating through long succeeding periods of the past have made us what we are, and that the same forces, or others adapted to our nature, will continue to develop our character and shape our destiny, and make us what we shall be in the ages to come.

We come to feel, intuitively, that our paramount interests are not those which pertain to the present, that we have interests in the future which, though not yet realized, are not less real, and certainly not less important. The present is too momentary and fleeting to deserve our chief care. It is, in fact, a point of time which we can hardly call our own. We cannot take possession of it or detain it; it will not stay. Before we can grasp it, it is gone, gone into the past, while we, with our act unfinished, are swept into the future. Every breath we draw extends into the future. Our whole existence, except this earthly span of life—indeed except this instant—and therefore all our chief interests are in the future. What we are and what we have are of trifling concern

compared with what we shall be and what we shall have. What we are and have is of momentary consideration ; what we shall be and shall have, will concern us forever. What we are, and have, relate to our incipient state here : what we shall be, and shall have, to our progressive state hereafter, through every stage and period of development. What is the period of human life in the midst of the cycles of eternity ? A point without dimensions ! And shall we have a being commensurate in duration with these eternal cycles ? If so, what comparison can be made of temporal, with eternal, wellbeing ?

We cannot help feeling that we sustain to the endless future relations which, however mysterious, are interminable, and that we have some interest, undefined it may be, in things and events pertaining to all coming ages. Where in the future will our minds consent to rest with a feeling that nothing beyond concerns us ? If we fix upon the close of a million of ages, the inquiry still arises spontaneously, What will be our condition in the period beyond ? Who will say that this uniform disposition of mind is mere vagary ? Who will affirm that this universal innate impression of continuous existence, involving interests in the remotest ages to come, has no basis of reality ? It cannot be that the deepest intuitions of our nature deceive us in this important matter. The conscious soul, in which these prophetic intuitions inhere, must exist, and feel, and act, and be acted upon, forever.

Thus it appears that the idea of continuous conscious existence into an endless future is a constitutional intuition of the mind. It is graven, as a first truth, upon our religious consciousness. It is what we feel and are

therefore compelled to believe. And this original intuition of the soul derives support from reason and analogy when we look around upon facts and processes in nature. The process of vegetation through successive stages, from the decay to the reproduction of the seed, the germ, the plant, the stock, the seed again ; the transformations of the chrysalis, the egg, the worm, the winged insect ; the embryo, the birth, the growth, decay, and reproduction of other animal forms ; the continuance and succession of genera and species proceeding from original types, and indicating a perpetual law of being—these and numerous other processes constantly going on around us furnish clews and analogies from which reason infers the eternal continuance and progression of our being. Change is busy ever and everywhere. Production, growth, decay, and reproduction, run their ceaseless rounds. Dissolution prepares the way for reconstruction ; decay is followed by renovation ; destruction by reorganization ; fading is succeeded by bloom ; death produces life ; beauty revives from ashes. Nothing retains its present state. There is change, metamorphosis everywhere ; but no annihilation, no tendency to non-existence.

We participate in the ceaseless transition which marks this common destiny. In any present moment we are not what we were nor what we shall be. Things which concerned us deeply once have lost their interest now, and our present concerns, when reviewed from a future standpoint, will appear equally unimportant. The future, the great future, stretching onward and ever onward, embracing all the interests of eternal existence, is our grand concern. What and where and how we shall

be should engage our most earnest solicitude. And if the shaping of our destiny and the determining of our state in the advancing ages are dependent, in any degree, on our own conduct or effort, it is our deepest concern to understand the case, and our highest wisdom to act with due regard to it. If during our present life we are sowing for an eternal harvest, and if it be true that "whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap," it is all-important that we "be not deceived" in this matter. We want to know the truth of the case. And if not deceived or ignorant or infatuated, we shall not surely be indifferent nor negligent.

Thus the future states of existence are imaged alike in the soul of man and in the constitution of nature. The present world seems to be a dim photograph, an indistinct representation of the world to come. It is, no doubt, from this general correspondence, as much as from the barrenness of language, that material imagery is employed to convey an idea of spiritual things. Shadows of realities in the world unseen and eternal are projected all around us; and the soul, conscious of its supernatural origin and destiny, perceives them and realizes the facts they represent. Hence doubtless it is, in part, that the belief in a future life is so universal. It is taught by the religion of nature, and therefore embraced, in some form in every creed of every faith.

But this universal belief is not to be accounted for in this way alone. It rests on an original revelation from Heaven, and tradition has preserved it, however corrupted, through all the ages and generations of men. Revelation is our only source of accurate knowledge on this subject. To the inquiry, "If a man die, shall he live

again?" natural religion will reply, with more or less confidence, as it speaks through different minds, "Yes." But if it be inquired, "How do the dead rise? and with what body do they come?" and what will be the conditions of existence beyond the grave? we must turn for the answer to the Word of God. Let us, then, consult the divine oracles, and endeavor, by careful, prayerful study, to ascertain what God has revealed relating to the future eternal destiny of man.

Some assert that very little is clearly revealed concerning the future states in the Holy Scriptures, that their allusions to the subject are too indefinite and obscure for human apprehension. This would be strange if true. Religion has special reference to man's higher spiritual nature and relations and to the interests of his future life and being. A system of revelation which should be silent, unintelligible, or doubtful on this subject would fail of its chief object, whatever else it might reveal. There is no such deficiency in the Bible revelation. He who reads and weighs well its utterances will find much that is expressly revealed; and he who faithfully studies it for this object will find new views opening to his spiritual vision from many a passage which to the mere cursory reader conveys no allusion to things to come. He will be surprised to find how the Book abounds in instructive allusions, more significant often from being incidental, to the worlds to come, and the conditions and relations of men beyond the present order of being. Little is communicated directly or descriptively. We perceive the reason of this. Human speech, adapted to the nature of things in this material world, has no terms or forms of expression to convey literally

ideas of spiritual things ; and the human mind, in its present state of sense and perception, could not comprehend any possible literal description of things pertaining to a world or state to which none of the bodily senses are now adapted. Hence necessarily the pen of inspiration resorts to sensible figures and material imagery ; and in this way probably all that we are capable of knowing is placed within our apprehension.

We see in this an evidence of the sublime truth of the Christian revelation. The sacred books of other religions find no difficulty in communicating their conceptions of being beyond the grave in literal terms of speech. Those conceptions rise no higher than the sensible and the sensual as pertaining to earthly modes and conditions of existence. But the Bible elevates our thoughts to fields of existence which lie above and beyond the confines of sense and the range of material conception, to objects of spiritual discernment, of enlightened faith, to things which " eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," nor the unregenerate heart of man conceived. To make such a revelation required all the imagery and figurative representation which can be derived from human language as adapted to this material state of being ; and to understand such a revelation must require diligent study and careful comparison of scripture with scripture. The sense must be sought beneath the surface, and, pre-eminently in what relates to future being, the Holy Scriptures must be their own expounder.

Our knowledge of what lies beyond the grave must depend chiefly on the proper interpretation of this inspired imagery. When, " men moved by the Holy Spirit, speak " to us in figurative forms of expression, as they

necessarily must on this subject, we should endeavor to understand as far as possible what these figures represent. They must not be taken as mere allegory or symbolism : this the contexts or parallel texts in nearly every instance show. The pictures they bring before the mind are not mere hieroglyphics. They are not simply emblematic representations of abstract qualities, conditions, or states of mind. They represent substantial realities, more substantial doubtless than the objects of sense from which they are taken ; as, for instance, a real thing of earth stands as representative of a corresponding but more real thing of heaven. On this principle of interpretation there are passages of Holy Writ which are vividly descriptive of the future worlds and states. On any other principle we can get no intelligible idea on the subject. All is wrapped in obscurity.

No, the Holy Scriptures are not silent nor obscure, if understood in their most obvious sense, on the subject of our future being. It is their main design to interest us in things pertaining to the world unseen and eternal, and thus " call us away from flesh and sense," and make us feel that there are higher objects to live for than this world can afford. And as the attainment of these objects depends on the life we live and the character we form here, they furnish a perfect standard of human character, God's holy law, which not only takes cognizance of words and deeds, but extends to the thoughts and intents of the heart. By this infallible criterion, applied, without respect of persons, to all ranks and positions, from the pauper to the prince, all our race are distinguished into two great classes, the righteous and the



wicked, those who serve God and those who serve Him not. The one class are objects of God's favor, the other of his displeasure ; for the one there are precious promises, for the other fearful threatnings ; the one are represented as "vessels of mercy prepared for glory," the other as "vessels of wrath fitted for destruction." "Jehovah loveth the righteous," but "God is angry with the wicked every day." (Ps. 7 : 11 and 146 : 8.) Such is the general tenor of Scripture.

But now, when we look around on the diversified conditions of men or trace them in history, we do not find their earthly fortunes corresponding with this distinction which the Scriptures make. There seems to be little if any discrimination on the ground of virtue or vice, righteousness or sin, in the distribution of the good things of this world. Misfortune befalls the godly ; success attends the ungodly. The righteous suffer affliction and adversity in every form ; the wicked prosper in all their ways. Dives rolls in wealth and "fares sumptuously every day ;" Lazarus lies at his gate full of sores, and begging for crumbs from the rich man's table.

Men are not dealt with according to their character here, nor are they rewarded according to their deeds. It is true there are recognized rewards of virtue and vice in this life. Exemplary consequences often follow the deeds both of good and bad men. But such temporal consequences are very uncertain. They are subject to too many exceptions to furnish the basis of a rule. Wickedness goes unpunished, righteousness unrewarded. Justice fails in the administration even when there is no direct corruption or perversion. Human tribunals are fettered by rules and forms which are more helpful to

the wrong than the right. Fraud and violence are often countenanced and rewarded. There is little of just retribution here. Neither the promises nor threatenings of inspiration are executed. The unavoidable inference is, there is a state of strict retribution hereafter. Otherwise God's moral administration would be a failure and his government must fail. The day will come when God will vindicate the justice and perfection of his government by "rendering unto every man according to his deeds."

Corresponding with those two distinct classes of human character and in perfect harmony with the whispers of intuition in the soul and with the voices of nature, of reason, and of conscience, as to the just deserts of right and wrong, of piety and sin, the Scriptures reveal two places and states of future being in which the destinies of all our race will be finally and immutably settled, on principles of absolute equity and truth. They reveal a world of perfection, with mansions of rest and blessedness prepared for the righteous, where they will dwell in unmingled felicity forever ; and a place of perdition, a region of "outer darkness," and "eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels," where the wicked will be doomed to take up their final abode. To convey to us an idea of these retributive places of being and the final condition of men, Inspiration employs the utmost power of language, accommodating it to our apprehension by the most impressive forms of figure and imagery which this world can supply, and then makes choice of two significant terms to comprehend the whole of human destiny. These terms are LIFE and DEATH. Applied the one to the state of the righteous, the other to the state of the wicked, they include all that pertains to the future eter-

nal as well as the present lot of men. "The wages of sin is death ; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 6 : 23.) "If ye live according to the flesh, ye shall die ; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. 8 : 13.) This will be made plainer as we advance. It is important therefore, as preliminary to the correct understanding of what the Scriptures reveal concerning the future states, that we understand the full significance of these terms as used in the Holy Scriptures. Considered in their true relations to conscious existence and especially to such a nature as ours, what is Life ? what is Death ?

# THE AGES TO COME.

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## CHAPTER I.

### LIFE AND DEATH.

THESE terms are very commonly applied in the Scriptures to the phenomena of life and death with which we are familiar in the natural world and in the common lot of man ; as when we read of the life and death of the patriarchs and others. In this current acceptation, they serve, in sacred as in secular use, the ordinary purposes of colloquial communication and historical record. But they are employed also in a fuller, more comprehensive, sense, to express eternal realities and conditions of being.

Whatever life and death may be in themselves, we can scarcely speak of them without personification. Indeed, from the effects we witness, we almost necessarily think of them as real personal agents. We may, however, conceive of them either as active principles or as passive states. In either conception, they find in this world but a very imperfect sphere of manifestation. We see only their effects upon feeble physical organisms, and the consequent states of vitality or dissolution. But we see enough, properly considered, to convince us that they

have a wider range and greater efficiency than can be made manifest in this stage of being or in earthy perishable organisms. And the same conviction arises legitimately from the instinctive love of life and fear of death, which are so prevailing. This can hardly be accounted for by the mere indefinite motive of self-preservation. That mysterious endowment called instinct, which decides so accurately upon facts and principles within its range, seems evidently to have cognizance of life and death as realities more efficient and permanent than anything we witness in their earthly manifestations.

As active principles, there is not scope within the limits of material existence for the exercise of their powers, and therefore they cannot exhibit here the effects which they are capable of producing. Life is encumbered with natural and moral evil, impeded in its proper action by all the adverse consequences of sin, sickness and pain, care and toil, trouble and sorrow, anxiety and disappointment, decrepitude and decay, all the innumerable ills which are entailed upon fallen humanity : these are the natural concomitants of death. Thus obstructed, life cannot produce its proper results. And death finds no opportunity, in this stage of existence, with its frail forms of life, to expend his power, though every living creature yields and falls before him. One touch of his icy hand arrests all the functions of physical life, and delivers the victim over to corruption and dissolution. And such victims, though comprehending every individual of all the numberless forms and generations of animate nature on earth, are too feeble to show the power of death.

As states of being, there are but very imperfect exhi-

bitions of either in all that is seen and experienced in this inconstant world. The elements and concomitants of life and death are intermingled in the earthly lot of man, and in the condition of all things around him. And this it is which constitutes the imperfection of our present state. It is a mixed state of good and evil. Various fortunes made up of joy and sorrow, pleasure and pain, prosperity and adversity, checker the scene of this earthly sojourn, and enter, in varying degrees, into the vicissitudes of every one's experience. But these cannot, on any rational principle of generalization, be classed together. They belong to distinct categories of conscious being.

Here, in perfect consonance with the suggestions of enlightened reason, comes in the scriptural classification. Every good appertains to life, every evil to death ; and these together comprehend the whole lot of man. But they are intermingled in this state of being, so that neither is seen or experienced in its full reality. To constitute a perfect state, they must be separated, as must also their respective subjects, and assigned to distinct spheres of existence. Life, to be a state of felicity, as it is designed to be, and as it really is in its essential nature, must be freed from all the ills of mortality ; and death, to manifest its true nature and be what it is in itself, must be freed from every countervailing effect of life. Life is the sum of all good ; death is the sum of all evil. Life is a state of unmingled blessedness ; death is a state of unmingled woe. Life is a normal, death an abnormal state of being.

The Holy Scriptures furnish the clew to the only rational solution of the mysteries of life and death, by

describing the original condition of this creation and the consequences which followed the entrance of sin into it, and also by revealing the conditions of existence in the two final eternal states. The primitive Eden state, which was exempt from every ill and included every facility of enjoyment, is represented as a state of life; and "all the ills that flesh is heir to," all the evils that affect this world, whether natural or moral, are represented as attendant upon the entrance of death and manifesting his presence, as belonging therefore to the state of death. And these two states culminate finally the one in eternal life, which will be the felicitous lot of the righteous, the other in eternal death, which will be the wretched doom of the wicked.

#### THE FALL AND ITS EFFECTS.

This will appear more clearly if we consider the account given of the fall of man, and note the consequences which immediately followed the act of disobedience, in execution of the threatened penalty. Death was the penalty pronounced upon disobedience. God said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof dying thou shalt die." This comprehended the whole of the penalty. No other or additional penal consequence was attached to transgression. To this correspond the words of the apostle, with the implied hereditary effect upon all of Adam's race more distinctly announced: "By one man sin entered into the world and death by sin; and so death passed upon all, for that all have sinned," and "by the offence of the one death reigned through the one." (Rom. 5:12, 17.) But when the act of disobe-

dience was committed, besides imposing pains and sorrows upon the woman, God said to Adam, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake. In sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. And thorns and thistles shall it cause to spring up to thee. And thou shalt eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." (Gen. 3 : 17, 19.)

This embraces a fearful catalogue of evils. Whoever will reflect upon it must perceive that there is specified or implied in it every evil that ever falls or can fall to the lot of man. All these came upon Adam's race in fulfilment of the single penalty pronounced against transgression—namely, *death*. Death therefore comprehends every evil incident to humanity, and is, in all respects, the perfect antithesis of life.

There was therefore a literal infliction of the penalty in what immediately befell our first parents. It is important to note the precise form of words employed : "*dying thou shalt die.*" According to the true import of this language, the work of death began upon them immediately. The poison of death entered into their constitution, they experienced the effects of death, the day, the hour, the act of disobedience was committed. And that not merely in the sense that they became mortal, but that by every pain they felt, by every sorrow they bore, by every sensation of regret or shame or want, by every trouble and fear they experienced, they were actually the victims of death. Till then they had



enjoyed intimate communion with God, and they had never known fear ; but now, when they heard the voice of Jehovah, they were afraid, and hid themselves from his presence among the trees of the garden. From that time death infected the food they ate, the water they drank, the air they breathed, lurked in some form of danger in all their paths, infested all their retreats. Every pain and ill reminded them of their changed estate, and recalled the penalty imposed upon disobedience ; and they said or thought, " This is *death*." They had fallen under the domain of death, and were, in every department of their nature, subject to his power, as described by the apostle, " dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. 2 : 1.) And this is the natural, hereditary state of all their descendants ; for " in Adam all died." And this " dying," this progressive work of death, must have continued till all the race were overwhelmed in eternal death, had not the grace of God interposed by the plan of redemption to arrest it. Thus Adam and all his posterity came under the dominion of death. Dying, all died.

Death must therefore be regarded as the penal and, in greater or less degree, the natural, consequence of sin. As fulfilling the threatening of Jehovah, it is penal. If it was infused, as a subtle and malignant poison, into the nature of man, by the forbidden fruit itself, it is also natural. As hereditary it is natural. But in fact no such distinction can be made when God, the Author of nature, pronounces the penalty. Whether for judgment or mercy, the elements conform to his laws and execute his will. " Fire, and hail, and snow, and vapor, and stormy wind, fulfil his word." (Ps. 148 : 8.) " In his

hand is the soul of all living and the breath of all flesh of man." (Job 12 : 10.) Under the divine administration, the penal coincides with the natural.

It is certain, however, that the consequences of the first transgression extended beyond the race of man. Whatever may have been the condition of the preadamitic earth and of the animal tribes which preceded man, the Scriptures plainly teach that the whole creation, which was contemporaneous with Adam, and of which he was the appointed head, felt the effect of his sin. The very ground was cursed for his sake, and the curse affected all its products ; and " we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." (Rom. 8 : 22.) In the only true and complete sense, " death *entered* by sin." The effect of death upon frail physical organisms, vegetable and animal, is seen in the entombed remains of former geological ages. But on these, as we have seen, death could not exert his power ; in these he could not perpetuate his reign. At his touch they crumbled and went back to their original elements, and ceased to be, or passed into mere inorganic masses of petrification. They could not pass into the state of death and continue to exist in their distinctive nature. The nature and power of death can be displayed only in a being capable of immortality. Such a being can abide under the absolute dominion of death, endure his utmost inflictions, and thus continue to exist, in the state of death, forever ; and no other can. But there was no such being on earth previous to the creation of man. This world could be a scene of mortality, but it could not be a domain of death, while no creature superior to brutes dwelt upon it. Death could not enter in his full

power and inaugurate his reign till a race was introduced in whose constitution it could be perpetuated. And he could exercise no dominion over man till he transgressed the law of his Maker. But the act of transgression, by which man became the victim of death, affected in its consequences the whole system of creation of which he was made the head, especially in its relation to him. And we learn, moreover, that this whole creation, groaning and suffering thus under the ban of sin, "is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God," and destined to share, in some way, in the blessed "deliverance from the bondage of corruption" which will attend upon the finished work of redemption. But of this in the proper place.

#### THE EDEN STATE AND ITS POSSIBILITIES

What would have been the condition of man on the earth if he had never sinned may be inferred from the inspired account of the creation and of the primitive adaptation of the earth to man. From the sublimely simple description of the Paradise of Eden, and of the condition and occupation of the first pair while in their state of innocency, it appears that everything was adapted to the constitution of man, made perfectly congenial with his nature, so as to supply every want, satisfy every desire, gratify every sense, give happy employment to every power and affection, and thus promote his complete felicity. The garden was planted in the eastern part of a region of country called Eden, which signifies pleasantness—that is, *the pleasant land*. And this name it received in that period of simple and pure originality when all the terms of language were fresh from the mint

and true to nature, and therefore descriptively significant. The almost innumerable theories and conjectures of commentators and speculators as to the situation and extent of Eden may, with one or two exceptions, be safely and profitably disregarded in studying this subject. It was evidently an extensive region, including within its borders the sources, or more properly the common source, of a well-known river system of the East. It took in a part of the mountain region of Armenia about the heads of the Euphrates and the Tigris. This is certain; for those rivers can be identified by their names through all ages. There is good reason to believe that by a thorough exploration, abiding carefully by the scripture account, with due allowance for changes common on the earth's surface effected by the agencies of nature through the long lapse of time, the site of the original Paradise might be determined with tolerable accuracy.

To form a distinct idea of the topography of the garden from the brief description given in Genesis, we must conceive of a central reservoir, or lake, copiously supplied by "a stream which went forth from" the highlands of Eden. From this reservoir, as a common fountain-head, issued four pellucid streams, which, flowing in different directions, "watered the garden," and then, passing its limits, and successively swelled by tributaries, they pursued their meandering way, "compassing the lands," and fertilizing the valleys below. On the lovely spot surrounding that bright lake, by which the mountain-stream was arrested, and "whence it was parted and became four heads," "Jehovah God planted the garden, and there he put the man whom he had

made. And Jehovah God caused to spring out of the ground every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food."

The description is brief and simple, but sublimely comprehensive. It comprehends or implies every object of enjoyment, every circumstance of happiness. And this is sufficient to show what this world, while uncursed by sin, was capable of becoming as the residence of man. The same divine Hand which prepared the site and "planted the garden eastward in Eden" could have enlarged its borders, provided other fountains and streams to water and fertilize it, caused other delightful groves to spring out of the ground and flourish, yielding beauty and shade and fragrance and fruit, multiplied the bowers of Paradise, and thus have expanded the area of its bloom and charms, till the whole surface of the earth became "a garden of God," an abode of perfect bliss for the multiplied families of the favored race.

#### THE TREE OF LIFE AND THE TREE OF DEATH.

In the midst of the garden stood the tree of life. It was among the trees of whose fruit man might "freely eat;" and it was evidently placed at that central point for readiness of access to serve a wise and beneficent design. It had power, as its name implies, to arrest every tendency to dissolution and decay in man's physical nature, and communicate immortality. And thus, whatever may have been the frailty and exposure of man's original constitution, formed as he was from the dust, he had the means at hand of averting at once every evil incident to a state of mortality, and securing

endless and perfect life in the flesh. He might have "put forth his hand and taken of the tree of life, and ate, and lived forever" amid the scenes of Paradise. But, alas, our first parents, instead of taking of the tree of life, yielded to the tempter and took of the tree which, in fulfilment of the divine threatening, proved to them the tree of death.

For some wise purpose, inscrutable to us, though doubtless having reference to a probation requisite to the perfecting of such a moral nature as ours, there grew "also in the midst of the garden the tree of knowledge of good and evil," of the fruit of which they were forbidden to eat on penalty of death. Some have been disposed to regard this as an arbitrary *malum prohibitum*, inconsistent with the character of God, and have asked how it can be reconciled with the divine goodness that "the act of eating a little fruit from a tree could be visited with so severe a penalty." Others have pronounced it too puerile to be taken literally, and have received it therefore only as part of an instructive allegory. But whatever symbolism may be embraced in the record, doubtless the whole narrative is to be received as historically true.

This simple command answered every purpose of probation to the innocent, isolated pair. It was exactly suited to their simple, childlike state. They could hardly have felt the force of an appeal to moral reasons and obligations while as yet ignorant of the relations on which these depend. It must be considered that the moral law, as afterward promulgated from Sinai, could have little application to them. The commands of the second table could have no place, for there was no

occasion to violate them. They were assailable only at the point of their relation to God. If that point were fortified, all would be secure. To love God with all their heart was all that was required, in their case, to guard them against every enemy, prepare them for every relation, and secure the highest end of their being ; and no temptation to violate any other law of their nature could at that time be brought to bear upon them. The simple, positive test of the forbidden tree, resting upon no reason but the command of Jehovah, was therefore precisely suited to their state. It was a test of love to God, for it furnished an occasion for free, voluntary submission to his will ; and cheerful, unquestioning obedience is the sure proof of love. Had our first parents stood firm at this point and resisted the tempter, the whole object of probation would have been secured. Their moral power would have acquired strength by that exercise of it to withstand every assault of the great adversary, and thenceforth, as new relations arose imposing new duties, to render perfect obedience to every requirement of God's holy law. They might then have eaten of the fruit of immortality from the tree of life and lived forever in free communion with God and in the enjoyment of all the blessings so richly provided for them. They would then have retained the image of God in which they were made, and have transmitted it to all the generations of their happy posterity. That single act of steadfast obedience to the divine will in the face of strong temptation would have been the first step in the path of endless holy progress and development.

But it must not be supposed that man's first disobedience and consequent ruin were unforeseen of God. Pro-

vision was made in the original constitution of man, in anticipation of his disobedience, to avert the extreme consequences of his fall. His body, "formed of the dust of the ground," was subject by nature, like all material structures, to decay and dissolution. Should death enter and make it his victim, he would destroy it, and thus, by dissolving the material part of man, put an end to his earthly existence. And this is the utmost that death can do in this state of being. By one fell stroke he robs himself of his victim. If death exercise any further power upon man, it must be upon his spiritual or reanimated nature in his eternal state.

But now suppose that our first parents, after having by disobedience incurred the dreadful penalty, had "taken also of the tree of life," what must have been the subsequent doom of the race? Their bodies thus rendered superior to destruction by the power of death, they must have continued to dwell on the earth subject to all the ills and woes which sin had entailed, sickness and sorrow and pain and decrepitude, and every evil which attends in the train of the king of terrors, ever increasing as their wretched years increased. Bearing forever the image and fixed in the condition of the earthy with all its frailties, exposures, and sufferings, they must have endured the tyranny of death forever in the flesh without any possibility of redemption, or any hope of deliverance. No Saviour could have interposed, clothed himself in our flesh, and died for our ransom.

But God in mercy "drove out the man and placed at the east of the garden the cherubim and the flaming sword, which turned every way to keep the way of the



tree of life." And thus the way of salvation by the vicarious offering of Christ was kept open, and the "new and living way has been instituted through his flesh." (Heb. 10 : 20.) "Since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2 : 14.) Death, by destroying the body, loses forever his grasp upon his prey, in the case of every believer in Christ. Over such, death can have dominion no more. "When their earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, and they are clothed upon by their house which is from heaven, mortality will be swallowed up in life;" and then in their triumphant experience "will be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

We have considered those phenomena of life and death which pertain to this world, and we have seen that neither of them finds scope to exert its power or exhibit its complete results in this stage of existence. Neither of them is experienced or witnessed here to the extent and intensity of its full reality. Let us inquire now more directly into the real nature of life and death according to their scriptural significance.

#### THE TRUE NATURE OF LIFE AND OF DEATH.

1. LIFE in all its forms proceeds from God. He only "has life in himself." (John 5 : 26 ; 1 : 4.) He is the great original "fountain of life." (Ps. 26 : 9.) All other beings derive life from him, and perish when from any cause the necessary constant supply ceases. "He

giveth life to all." (Acts 17 : 25 ; Ps. 104 : 29.) Man received this precious gift immediately from the divine Fountain. Other creatures seem to have derived it through secondary causes. " God said, Let the waters swarm with living beings," and " Let the earth bring forth the living being after its kind." (Gen. 1 : 20, 24.) But the life of man is the breath of God. " Jehovah God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living soul ;" and " in him we live and move and have our being." (Gen. 2 : 7 ; Acts 17 : 28.)

In natures endowed with sensation and consciousness, life is a principle of pure animation and enjoyment. When it operates freely, it produces a state of perfect felicity. The uninterrupted enjoyment of life is happiness to the full extent of the capacities of the being on whom the blessed boon is conferred. It includes the supply of every want, the satisfaction of every desire, the gratification of every sense, the legitimate employment of every faculty, the delightful normal exercise of every affection of the soul. Whatever detracts from such a state of perfect enjoyment is an effect of death, and can have no place in a state of perfect life. The Scriptures assume this as self-evident. Hence they include in the idea of life the whole felicitous state of the redeemed, heaven and all its joys and glories. In this comprehensive sense, the term is often employed by the Saviour. To the self-righteous young man he said, " If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Matt. 19 : 17. So also Matt. 18 : 8, 9.) As the reward to his faithful followers, who should forsake all for his sake, he promised " eternal life in the world to come." (Matt. 19 : 29 ; Luke 18 : 30.) He said, " I give unto my

sheep eternal life" (John 10 : 28) ; and in prayer to the Father, " that he [the Son] should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17 : 2.) The whole purpose of God's love to our fallen race, in giving his Son for our salvation, was " that whoever believes on him should not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3 : 16.) And the final words of the Judge, " the righteous shall go into life eternal," comprehend all that pertains to the blessedness of the redeemed in the possession of their heavenly inheritance. (Matt. 25 : 46.) Thus they " come forth to the resurrection of life" (John 5 : 29), " receive a crown of life" (James 1 : 12 ; Rev. 2 : 10), " have right to the tree of life," and " take of the water of life," in the heavenly Paradise. (Rev. 22 : 14, 17.) In these and many other passages, life comprehends everything which contributes to the felicity of the saved in the realm of the blest, all that pertains to the beatitude and glory of that world where angels dwell and God manifests his immediate presence.

2. DEATH, on the other hand, is a state of separation from God. Those who forsake God will be forsaken by him, and become " alienated from his life." (Eph. 4 : 18.) That predominance of the carnal mind which is enmity against God is death. (Rom. 8 : 6, 7.) And this state of death will be consummated when the Judge shall pronounce the word of doom, " Depart from me," and " the wicked shall be driven away in his wickedness." (Prov. 14 : 32.)

Death is the ultimate consequence of sin. " Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1 : 15.) But Satan is the author of sin. " The devil sinneth from the beginning ;" and sin is the work of the devil. (1 John.

3 : 8.) Death therefore has its origin in him ; and it is expressly stated that " he has the power of death " (Heb. 2 : 14.) It is the instrument of his malignant power. It belongs to his dark domain. Its complete realization is found only in that region of outer darkness and death-shade where Satan holds uninterrupted dominion.

Death therefore, in its full import, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures, is not a termination or cessation of conscious existence. It is not an unconscious state. It is a fixed and unalterable condition of wretched existence, with consciousness undiminished, probably intensified in the future being when raised from the grave, by the change incident to the resurrection. It is the utter reverse of life. It comprehends every evil with no intermixture of good. It is the wretched state of irrevocable, unchangeable doom to which the judgment of the great day will consign the finally impenitent. Death has a fearful import and designates a dreadful state in such scriptures as the following :—" The soul that sinneth it shall die." " The sinner shall not live ; he shall surely die." (Ez. 18 : 4, 13.) " Sin unto death." " The end of these things [namely, the service of sin] is death." " The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6 : 16, 21, 23.) " The law of sin and death," from which " the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" alone can deliver us. " To be carnally-minded is death." " If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." (Rom. 8 : 2, 6, 13.) " Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Ja. 1 : 15.) " There is a sin unto death." (1 John 5 : 16.) " As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked ; but that the wicked turn from his way and live," etc. (Ez. 33 : 11.)

No one surely will say that death, in these and many other passages scattered through the Bible, means only the decease of the body, or any event or condition in the temporal state of man. It expresses the final doom, the endless, changeless condition of unpardoned sinners. To understand its significancy we must look into what is revealed of "the judgment and perdition of ungodly men." Especially may its clear definition be found in those Scriptures in which the state of the lost is set in antithesis with that perfect life which will be the eternal reward of the righteous :—"It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into eternal fire." (Matt. 18 : 8, 9.) "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.—Depart, ye cursed, into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matt. 25 : 34, 41, 46.) "They that did good shall come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that did evil to the resurrection of judgment." (John 5 : 29.) The judgment, whatever it may be, is the antithesis of life. It is condemnation to eternal death. "Some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. 12 : 2.) "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life ; but to those who are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish." (Rom. 2 : 7, 8, 9.) "And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20 : 15.) See further on the state of the lost in Chapter V., Section 2.

These quotations and comparisons (and many more might be produced) sufficiently show that death, in the completeness of its nature, is something more than temporary agony followed by unconsciousness and cessation of being. It is the complete reverse of life. It comprehends everything which is opposed to life. Life is a state of unmingled blessedness ; death is a state of unmitigated woe. And these two make up the whole condition and destiny of man. They are mixed in our earthly lot, but unmixed and separate in the state of final retribution beyond the grave. There, life will be the allotment of the righteous, and death of the wicked, while eternal ages endure.

#### MISTAKE OF THE ANNIHILATIONIST.

It is from a misunderstanding of what death is, in its true nature and character as revealed in the Word of God, that some professed believers in the Bible embrace the heresy of the annihilation of the wicked. When the Bible in so many places speaks of the death of the wicked, they understand it as signifying the end of being. There is no such intimation in the inspired volume. All the ills and woes which attend upon life here, with the last struggles and pains of expiring nature, are but a faint foreshadowing of that *state of death* which the Scriptures reveal as the finished result of sin. This conscious being of ours, with all its susceptibilities of enjoyment and suffering, of happiness and misery, whether we cast our lot with the saved or the lost, will continue forever in a course of destiny fixed and settled "on that day when God shall judge the world in righteousness in the

person of the man whom he has designated." (Acts 17 : 31.) When the Scriptures speak of the death of the wicked as the final consequence of sin, it is *eternal* death—that is, death as it will affect the enemies of God when banished forever from his presence, in the eternal state. When they speak of the destruction of the wicked, "it is that they shall be destroyed forever." (Ps. 92 : 7.) It is an "eternal destruction"—that is, a continuous, ever-progressing, never-ending work of destruction, "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1 : 9.) Death and destruction, when applied to the doom of the finally ungodly, signify an endless state of exile from the presence and favor of God, and hopeless ruin in the region of darkness and woe prepared for rebellious spirits. The destructionist and the annihilationist, in their peculiar views, are equally in conflict with the Word of God. Indeed, there is but an imaginary, undefinable difference between them. Life and death are eternal states of conscious being—the one a state of eternal living, the other of eternal dying.

It is evident that without just and adequate ideas of life and death, we cannot pursue intelligently the study of God's Word, or comprehend its teaching, on the subject of the future states. For that reason this preliminary discussion was necessary. We may now enter more directly upon the inquiry, What is revealed of man's destiny beyond the grave?

#### STATEMENT OF STATES OF BEING.

Two successive states are clearly revealed : the one following the death, the other the resurrection, of the

body ; the one *intermediate*, the other *final*. Each of these is twofold, embracing the state of the righteous and the state of the wicked, distinctly and separately. And thus, though life and death comprehend the whole destiny of man, the allotment of every individual of the race embraces three grades, or modes, of existence. There is the *incipient* or material state pertaining to the life in the flesh ; the *intermediate* or disembodied state between the death and the resurrection of the body ; and the *final* or eternal state following the judgment of the great day, and extending onward without limit into the ages of ages.

After passing the limit of this earthly stage of being, the righteous and the wicked dwell together no more. They are separated in their conditions and destinies, and assigned to separate places, forever. There are therefore, as including the whole race of man, four distinct future states of being, two intermediate, two final.

Concerning the first or present state, little need be added to what has been incidentally said already. Life here, in its best action and exhibition, is very imperfect. It is affected by the consequences of the fall, tainted by sin, corrupted and vitiated by the channel of transmission, and obstructed in its action by the elements and concomitants of death. Quite literally, "in the midst of life we are in death." There is a continual struggle between life and death, in this mortal state. Sin has established the reign of death, and all are subject to his earthly dominion, "slaves of sin and death." The inspired description of man's state, by nature and descent, is, "dead in trespasses and sins," (Eph. 2 : 1) ; therefore "children of wrath without hope and without God in



the world," (Eph. 2 : 3, 12.) "In Adam all died." Through his offence death reigns in all his descendants. (Rom. 5 : 17.) This is the hereditary consequence of sin ; and this is the condition of all the race, from which they can be delivered only "by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." They are "condemned already." They are not only under the sentence, but, in large degree while in the flesh, under the penalty of God's violated law ; and they are constantly exposed to eternal death. If at any moment the doom of death were executed upon the unbelieving, unpardoned sinner, it would not change, it would only intensify his moral state.

From this state of death the *soul* is delivered by the operation of the Holy Spirit in regeneration ; hence represented as a "passing from death unto life." (John 5 : 24.) The subjects of this heavenly grace are spoken of as "alive from the dead," (Rom. 6 : 13) ; "made alive with Christ." (Col. 2 : 13.) "And you being dead in trespasses and sins, God, being rich in mercy, made alive with Christ," (Eph. 2 : 1-5 ; Col. 2 : 13.) It is "a new creation" in which "old things pass away, behold all things become new." (2 Cor. 5 : 17 ; Gal. 6 : 15.) It is "newness of life" to the soul.

But the *body* is still mortal, and therefore soul and body may be separated by the hand of death, notwithstanding the new birth. The bodies of the regenerate as well as the unregenerate must yield to death. That consequence of sin remains till the morning of the resurrection. Then "this mortal shall put on immortality," and Christ, who is "the resurrection and the life," "will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory." (Phil. 3 : 21.)

"When Christ, the life of his believing children, shall appear, then shall they appear with him in glory." (Col. 3 : 4.) Soul and body will be renovated and reunited. And thus, "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," their whole being will be restored from the ruin of the fall ; and death, "the last enemy, will be destroyed."

The beneficent design of God, in thus making and leaving our bodies subject to dissolution by the hand of death, has already been considered. It was to prepare the way for our deliverance, in the foreseen event of disobedience, from the ruin of sin and the dominion of death. It was to provide for our salvation by the vicarious death of Christ, "that as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign, through righteousness, unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5 : 21.) How clearly and comprehensively is all this expressed by the apostle, in the following passage addressed to a band of God's regenerate children : "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin ; butt he spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwells in you." (Rom. 8 : 10, 11.)

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## CHAPTER II.

### THE INTERMEDIATE OR DISEMBODIED STATE.

DEATH brings the final catastrophe upon man's mortal body. One touch of his icy hand chills its blood, stills its pulses, and delivers it over to corruption and worms. "In the grave its beauty consumes away," and it re-

turns to its original elements. The sentence for sin is executed upon it : "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This is the common lot of man ; "and there is no discharge in that war."

What becomes of the soul when its tenement of clay is demolished ? Does it linger about the ruin, and hover, homeless, over the scene of dissolution ? Does it enter the grave with the mortal remains, and there, all unconscious, like the dust of its former dwelling, "sleep the long years away" ? Is there no congenial place of abode prepared for it when divested of the body ? Does it perish with the body ? Can death destroy it as he does the frail structure in which it temporarily dwells ? Death can destroy the material organs of sense and dissolve the outer frame of nature ; but can he destroy the immaterial organs of sensation and dissolve the organism of the conscious being within ? This is at variance with the essential idea of the constitution of spiritual or psychical being. It contradicts the clearest phenomena of our inner nature. It is contrary to sound philosophy as well as to the Holy Scriptures to suppose that the soul is subject to decomposition ; nor is it consistent with its nature to be quiescent. It is always active. It is awake and busy while we sleep. In dreams, in trance, in various states of ecstasy, even in reverie, the soul seems to leave the body and visit scenes and witness transactions sometimes unknown before, and often indescribable. To every believer in the Bible the visions and raptures of prophets and apostles, which are in harmony with the laws of our nature, furnish inspired illustration of this. From what we feel and know, we necessarily infer that the soul can exist and act independently of the body.

Whither then does it go when turned out of its house of clay? Does it pass immediately to its final reward, to the place of its eternal destination, the world of perfect felicity or the region of woe? If so, what need of the resurrection of the body? or what purpose could require it? And wherefore the judgment? Why are the dead recalled to receive a sentence which has already been executed, and which only remands them to the same place and state again? And why such a reply to the sentence from the throng on either hand of the Judge? That reply, whatever it may indicate of modesty and humility on the part of the righteous, or of self-righteous vindication on the part of the wicked, is clearly expressive of some degree of suspense and surprise. No part of a scene so vividly descriptive can be taken as mere dramatical representation. We must turn to the Holy Scriptures for a satisfactory answer to these and similar questions. And we shall find it clearly revealed that there is an intermediate state, a place of disembodied existence, where departed spirits take up their abode from the hour of death till the resurrection.

The primitive churches understood this doctrine, having received it in its purity from inspired teachers, and they held it without question, as we learn from the earliest Christian Fathers. But it soon began to be corrupted and supplemented by superstitions and artful inventions, sharing largely in the effects of the apostasy, till at length the teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of the separate state was perverted into the doctrine of purgatory as a means of imposing upon the ignorant and the superstitious, and made to serve well the designs of priestly domination and extortion and corruption.

This shameful abuse and imposition drove the reformers, many of them, to the opposite extreme. In expurgating purgatory from their creeds, they rejected the middle state altogether. Many of the Protestant sects still continue to do so, while others pass the subject over in silence, perhaps without thought or inquiry on the part of their adherents. But the prevalence of corruption and heresy is no reason for rejecting or ignoring any doctrine, but rather for studying the Word of God more diligently, that we may discover and defend the truth and expose error. There *is* a world prepared for the abode of human spirits during their state of disembodiment ; though it is not a place where souls are purged from sin, nor a prison-house from which they may be released by prayers and masses and fees to priests, and mortuary rites and offerings.

#### THE CLEW FURNISHED BY PETER.

Peter, in his sermon on the day of Pentecost, furnishes a very important clew to this subject. He quotes a passage from the sixteenth Psalm as having prophetic reference to the promised Messiah ; and then goes on to show that this Scripture was fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. The point which claims our special attention, and indeed the chief point in the argument, is found in these words : " Thou wilt not leave my soul in *Sheol* [*Hades* in Peter's Greek rendering], neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption." (Ps. 16 : 10 ; Acts 2 : 27.) The apostle argues that this language, though used by the Psalmist in the first person, could not apply to David himself ; for " he both died and was buried, and his sepulchre is with us to this day ;" and " David has not

ascended into the heavens." Therefore, David shared the common lot of man. His soul *was* left in Hades and his body *did* see corruption. But the Psalmist, looking forward with prophetic vision, "spake of the resurrection of Christ, that *his* soul was not left in Sheol, neither did *his* flesh see corruption." And this, argues the apostle, is fulfilled in "Jesus, whom God hath raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." Paul uses the same argument, though the premises are not so fully stated, in Acts 13 : 35 seq.

This passage casts a bright beam of light upon the plan of salvation. We learn from it that Jesus, in executing the plan, met and vanquished death in both departments of our nature. His *body* was laid in the sepulchre, but it could not be held there. He revived and took it away ; and thus death was overpowered in the domain of the flesh. His *soul* entered Hades, the abode of the spirits of the dead ; but it was not left there ; it could not be retained there. It came forth from the region of the dead ; and thus death was conquered in the domain of the spirit. The victory over death was complete when with our restored and glorified nature, body and soul and spirit reunited in a perfect being, "he was taken up into heaven and sat down on the right hand of God." (Mark 16 : 19.) And this victory was achieved on behalf of all who, by faith in him, appropriate its benefit. He says to all who believe in him, "Because I live ye shall live also." (John 14 : 19.)

#### THE INTERMEDIATE PARADISE.

The case of the penitent, believing robber on the cross affords illustration of the passage just quoted. To his

humble, trustful prayer, Jesus replied, "Verily I say to thee, to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise." (Luke 23 : 43.) We understand, of course, that his spirit was to be with the Spirit of Jesus. The *body* of Jesus was in Joseph's tomb at the close of that day. But Jesus did not ascend to heaven on that day ; for he said to Mary Magdalene, "on the first day of the week," two days after, "Touch me not ; for I have not yet ascended to my Father." (John 20 : 17.) His final ascension did not occur till forty days after his resurrection. (Acts 1 : 3.) Paradise, then, in this passage, does not mean "the paradise of God" in heaven, "in the midst of which is the tree of life." (Rev. 2 : 7 ; 2 Cor. 12 : 2, 4.) That blessed place is not reached till after the resurrection of the body. But it means the place to which the souls of the pious, of all who trustingly accept Christ, go on being separated from the body by death, and where, as we learn from the case of David, according to Peter's exposition, they dwell during the period of disembodiment ; for "David did not ascend to heaven." Jesus, according to the same exposition, went to that place in executing the work of redemption ; but "it was not possible that he should be held" there. That this Paradise is a region or department in Hades is plain from a comparison of the two portions of Scripture now before us. In the quotation from Peter's discourse, Jesus is represented as entering Hades when he expired on the cross ; while his words of assurance, just before he expired, to the believing malefactor, represent him as about to enter Paradise. Doubtless it is called Paradise from its being a place of happiness prepared for the spirits of the pious dead, that being the most suitably expressive term that

human speech can furnish. (See Chap. V., Sec. 1, pp. 203-4.)

The view now presented embraces, no doubt, all that was originally meant by the *Descensus Christi ad inferos*. The clause in that ancient symbol called "The Apostles' Creed," κατέβη εἰς τὸν ᾗδην, is unobjectionable if literally translated and understood, "he descended into Hades." But as translated and read in English, "he descended into hell," it is impious. It associates Jesus, for a season, with demons and the damned, in the realm of eternal death !

Turn we now to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. (Luke 16 : 19, seq.) Whether this is a narrative of facts or simply a parable is quite immaterial as regards the instruction which Jesus has chosen this method to communicate. If any thing is fictitious or assumed, it is the names and earthly fortunes of the men, not the conditions, localities, or realities of that world unseen, into which a glimpse is opened to us. After a graphic description of the lot of the two men in this lifetime, Jesus says "that the beggar died, and was borne away by the angels into [or unto] Abraham's bosom." Most commentators agree with Lange on the phrase, "Abraham's bosom :—" "a metaphorical expression of the blessedness which, immediately after death, was prepared for pious Israelites in common with their blessed ancestor. In all probability," he adds, "the expression is synonymous with Paradise." (Luke 23 : 43). A less metaphorical and more natural sense may be inferred from the form of expression and from the passages in Acts and Luke already quoted and compared relating to the abode of pious departed spirits. The idea involved



seems to be that the souls of pious Israelites, like Lazarus, were conveyed by angels to the same place of happiness, the Paradise in Hades, where the soul of their revered ancestor dwells, awaiting the resurrection ; that there they enjoy his society, share his affection, like children leaning on a kind parent's bosom, and participate in all the " comfort " and peacefulness of his state. This was probably the original sense of the expression ; and in this sense, as corresponding with fact, Jesus employed it. This corresponds with the use of the term *bosom* in many passages of Scripture. (See Num. 11 : 12 ; 2 Sam. 12 : 3 ; Isa. 40 : 11, *et al.*) This very naturally passed, at a later period, into the mythical form in which it is given by Josephus, to which Jesus gives no countenance.

#### TWO SEPARATE REGIONS OF HADES.

But " the rich man also died, and was buried." His body was laid in the tomb, but his soul went to the world unseen, the place prepared for the separate spirits of the dead. " In Hades he lifted up his eyes—" in the same world in which, as we have seen, the soul of David has its intermediate abode, to which Lazarus had preceded him, and in which Abraham dwells ; but not in the same place, not in Paradise, the abode of happy spirits ; for he was " in torments," an incipient state of suffering, from which no relief could ever come. Dives and Lazarus were both in Hades, but in separate regions, between which a great and impassable chasm is fixed. The inhabitants on either side may approach near enough to see and converse with each other, but none can pass the great intervening gulf of separation between righteous and wicked spirits.

The conditions of the two former denizens of earth are now reversed. Dives, who in his earthly "lifetime received his good things," is now "tormented in flames;" and Lazarus, in happy contrast with the "evil things" which he suffered in his former state, "is now comforted" with rest and union and affectionate fellowship with kindred spirits and participation in their enjoyments. Nothing is said of the companionship of Dives; but if there is society in that region of darkness, it must be with companions in ruin, suffering, and woe.

Peter, in the second chapter of his second epistle, alludes evidently to the same place and state in which Dives awoke to consciousness from the stroke of death, as the place of intermediate custody and incipient retribution for all the impenitent dead, where they are confined till the general judgment. Taking "the world of ungodly men" who were destroyed by the flood, and the vile people of Sodom and Gomorrah who perished in the terrific overthrow of their cities, as examples of the doom of all "who live ungodly" and die in their sins, he draws this conclusion: "The Lord knows how to reserve the unjust in a state of punishment unto the day of judgment." But *τηρεῖν* means more than simply "to reserve;" it means *to keep in guard, to hold in custody*, as a felon for trial; hence its cognate, *τήρησις*, means "a ward, a prison." And the present participle *κολαζόμενος* used here will not admit the future idea, "to be punished," as rendered in the common version. It signifies suffering punishment now, or *in a state of punishment*, as rendered above. The idea therefore is of a miserable state of custody for wicked spirits, intermediate between death and the final judgment, corresponding en-

tirely with the case of the rich man in the Saviour's parable. In accordance with this, the apostle adds, "Cursed children, etc., to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness." The same language is applied to nearly the same description of character in Jude 13. It is worthy of note here that the word ζόφος, rendered "blackness" in both these passages, denotes, in the classics, "the gloom of the nether world," and also "*the nether world itself*" (Il. 15, 191; Od. 11, 57), with special reference, of course, to the dismal part of it, Tartarus. But the passage in Jude, "wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," while it refers to the final state of the ungodly, evidently refers also to the intermediate state as an incipient stage of suffering to be intensified and perpetuated after the judgment day "forever." In the same sense, Jude speaks, v. 7, of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah as "set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Though the word "eternal," in this connection, seems clearly to designate the *species*. It was not *material*, it was *eternal* fire which fell upon the cities of the plain (Gen. 19 : 24) and destroyed them. (See Chap. V., Sec. 2, p. 273.)

Another passage from Peter, in which he speaks distinctly of Christ's visiting the place of departed spirits and preaching to spirits in prison there, possesses great interest and demands earnest study, in the investigation of this subject. (1 Pet. 3 : 18, seq.) The following is an exact translation : "For Christ also suffered once concerning sins, a Just One on behalf of unjust, that he might lead us to God, having been put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit, in which also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed once

when the long suffering of God was waiting out [*απεξεδέχετο*] in the days of Noah while an ark was preparing, into which a few, that is eight, souls were saved by water." The apostle recurs to the same subject in chap. 4 : 5, 6, with additional specifications which serve to cast light upon this passage, and help in the interpretation and application of it :—" Who [referring to vile, idolatrous Gentiles just described] shall give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead. For to this end was the gospel preached also to dead men, that they might be judged according to men in flesh, but may live according to God in spirit."

These passages are confessedly beset with difficulties. They have engaged the study and ingenuity of commentators and been the copious source of free speculation in all the Christian ages. But the language is plain, and the difficulties arise not so much from what is, as from what is not, written. A subject is introduced about which, very naturally, we wish to know more ; and to gratify this desire, and from other motives of interest or curiosity, visionary and unscrupulous expositors have supplemented the text with unwarrantable inferences. Doubtless it was all made plain to the early Christians by the oral instructions of inspired men. But we have nothing left us on the subject in the written Word but these brief allusions of Peter.

Nothing would be gained by entering into an examination of the numerous theories and expositions by which it has been attempted to explain, or often to explain away, these apostolic allusions to an interesting event in the world of separate spirits. Better take the language in its distinct import, without anticipating or providing

against hard inferences or vain speculations, but accepting, without question or qualification, what is clearly revealed. See Lange's Com. *in loco* ("Excursus" by the translator) for a sufficient refutation of most of the theories above referred to.

Directing our thoughts now to the main passage (ch. 3 : 18), no allegorical or metaphorical interpretation of language so plain, and so distinctly historical, is admissible. Time, place, persons, acts, and order of events are distinctly stated. It must be taken literally. Sound exegesis will admit no other sense of the passage than that our Lord Jesus Christ, after his crucifixion, while his body lay in Joseph's tomb, "went in spirit" to Hades, the world of departed spirits, and preached there to the spirits of persons who, in the days of Noah, during the building of the ark, persisted in unbelief and disobedience. All our difficulties must bend to this inflexible exegesis.

This brings us to face some hard questions, to which, after they have engaged so many acute minds, it may seem presumptuous to attempt any clearer or fuller answer. But it does seem to me that some important data, essentially embraced in the apostle's statement, have been overlooked, and that these data legitimately applied will shed light upon the whole subject, and help in the solution of every question.

Whither, when, and in what state, our Lord went and preached to the spirits are questions which need no discussion. They are settled by the plain words of the text as expressed in the above translation. We have here an explicit revelation of the "Descensus Christi ad in-

feros," the descent of Christ to the dwellers in Hades. But the following questions meet us here :

1. To *what spirits* did Christ preach ? The text seems to answer directly and specifically : " To the spirits which disobeyed in the days of Noah while an ark was preparing." Our view is therefore limited to the one hundred and twenty years of God's special forbearance while Noah was building the ark. The disobedience which marked those to whom Christ preached was confined to that particular period. But (a) was the preaching *to the good* of that period exclusively? So held Marcion, Irenæus, Tertullian, John Damascene, *mult. al.* But certainly not to all the good. Noah and his family (the " eight souls") at least were excepted. They were not among the disobedient in the sense of this passage. They believed and obeyed and found favor with God. And there may, for aught that appears in the record, have been some others of similar character, who heeded the warnings of Noah, but died before the flood came. The preaching was to such only as disobeyed. (b) Was it *to the bad* ? So held Flaccius, Calov., Buddaeus, Aretius, Wolf, *et al.* But the disobedience of the openly wicked, those by whom " the earth was filled with violence," could not be spoken of as confined within the period " while the ark was preparing," nor as having exclusive reference to that brief dispensation of divine admonition and forbearance which immediately preceded the deluge. Most of them—all but the younger—had lived and formed a character before the announcement of the flood, and were disobedient and wicked before as much as after that event. It were, therefore gratuitous to charge them with disobedience " while the ark was preparing." Moreover, there could

be no conceivable object in preaching to wicked spirits, whose character was fixed and had received the stamp of destiny, by the neglect of the opportunities and abuse of the privileges of their probationary state, and whose doom was already sealed in the preliminary state of perdition. The idea advanced by some, that it was designed to aggravate their woe, is horrible. (c) What has been already said disposes sufficiently of the opinion of a third class of expositors (Athanasius, Ambrose, Erasmus, Calvin, *et al.*), that the preaching was to *both good and bad* indiscriminately.

To what spirits, then, did Christ preach? We recur again to the description of the text, which is definite and explicit: "To the spirits who disobeyed, once, in the days of Noah, while an ark was preparing." The disobedience with which, alone, those to whom he preached were charged was limited to that particular period of time. Of course it must have related to Noah's mission to the antediluvian world. Up to the time of that special mission, they were faithful and obedient to all God's requirements; and their character was devout. Thus they were distinguished from "the world of the ungodly." But they did not give due heed to the admonitions and warnings and exhortations of Noah, the prophet and messenger of God. It is this exceptional disobedience by which they are described in the text. We see that their moral attitude differed from that of every other class of their cotemporaries, and indeed of mankind in any age. To these alone did Christ preach. But,

2. Why preach to those spirits in particular, to the exclusion of all others? What just distinction could be made in their favor? The answer must be sought in the

moral and religious state of the antediluvian world. There was no idolatry among the antediluvians. If such an abomination had existed, it would not have escaped mention among the sins that provoked God to bring on the flood, brief as the account is. But there is no allusion to false gods in the record. Moreover, in the nature of the case, idolatry could not have been introduced at that early age of the world. Some of the old patriarchs, who had heard from Adam the account of his early life, his abode in the garden of Eden, his personal acquaintance and free intercourse with God in the days of his innocence, lived down to the time of Noah, and of the building of the ark. Adam himself (according to the Hebrew chronology) lived to within 126 years of the birth of Noah. Seth died only 14 years before Noah was born. Enos lived 705 years cotemporary with Adam and 94 years with Noah. Jared 470 years with Adam, 366 with Noah. Methuselah, who died the year of the flood, was 243 years the cotemporary of Adam. Lamech, who died five years before the flood, was born 56 years before the death of Adam. The ages of others, recorded and unrecorded, interlapped through all the period.

In such an era of longevity, and with a universal language as the vehicle of tradition, an imaginary deity could obtain no votaries. All possessed the knowledge of God by direct communication. And thus sin, as in the face of distinct light and absolute knowledge, assumed its most aggravated form. No wonder "the wickedness of man was great in the earth," when the wicked were open, wilful, deliberate, defiant, enemies and contemners of God. Such bold sinners would stop at no enormity; and such was the character of the greater part of mankind.



On the other hand, those who worshipped at all were worshippers of the true God. And doubtless there were many such, especially among the descendants of Seth. They were sincerely devout in spirit and pious in life ; and they were, of course, believers in the promised "Seed of the woman which was to bruise the serpent's head." Thus they were faithful and obedient servants of God, approved of him, till positive requisitions imposed special duties upon them in connection with the announcement of the flood and the preaching of Noah. But they disregarded the special mission of Noah, slighted his admonitions, and gave no heed to his counsels. Herein consisted their disobedience. For this they were left to perish in the flood ; and their spirits were consigned to a prison in the Unseen, till "he who hath the keys of death and Hades, who shutteth and no man openeth, and openeth and no man shutteth," should come to their deliverance.

What was the nature of their imprisonment can be known no further than can be gathered from the sacred Word. As they worshipped and served God, and believed in the promised Saviour, their disobedience was not of such a Nature as to consign them to the region of lost spirits in Hades, to await the doom of the ungodly. But it disqualified them for entering at once into the abode and society of the blest. Some preparatory chastening, some corrective discipline, was necessary to qualify them for full participation in the privileges and enjoyments of that happy place and state ; and the special mission and ministry of Christ were requisite to remove their disabilities, and enable them to "live according to God in spirit." In that condition, the news of Christ's

finished work would be "good tidings of great joy" to them.

3. *What* did Christ preach to those "spirits in prison"? Answer, he preached the Gospel. That is the uniform sense of *κηρύσσω*, the word used in the text, in the New Testament. But in the other passage (1 Pet. 4 : 6), where doubtless the same act is referred to, the apostle says expressly, *νεκροῖς ἐνγγελίσθη*, "to dead men the Gospel was preached." But the Gospel came to them, not as the *offer* of salvation, but as the *announcement* of salvation already completed, and secured to them. The great Deliverer, having finished his mission on earth, came now to the relief of those "spirits in prison;" in the completion of his redemptive work, "to preach deliverance to the captives; the opening of the prison to them that were bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Luke 4 : 18; Isa. 61 : 1.)

4. To *what end* was the Gospel preached to them? Peter gives the answer: "That they might be judged according to men in flesh, but may live according to God in spirit." That is, their case was put upon the same basis of judgment and final award with other men. They will be judged, like other men, "according to the deeds done in the body." Nothing to change their characteristic moral state and relation to God, nothing to affect their eternal salvation, transpired in the spirit world. Their eternal destiny is dependent on their conduct, and the character formed while in the flesh. Their justification in the day of judgment will depend on "the righteousness of God by faith of Jesus Christ," who "is the only name given under heaven, among men, whereby we must be saved." (Rom. 3 : 22; Acts 4 : 12.) But that

faith was not produced in them by Christ's preaching to them in their prison : it was possessed and exercised by them while yet in the flesh, as we have already seen. There was no change of heart or character in them after they entered the realm of the dead. But the announcement of the finished work of redemption by the Redeemer himself, the distinct unfolding of the scheme of grace, the full assurance of their acceptance with God, the opening of their prison, and their introduction into the paradise of blessed spirits, quickened every element and strengthened every pulsation of their spiritual life, and intensified every power of spiritual enjoyment. So that thenceforth, in the expressive language of the text, "they live according to God in spirit."

In view of this exposition it is important to remark :—

1. These passages furnish no ground on which to rest the salvation of those who die in heathenism. The case of those pious, but "once disobedient," antediluvians has no parallel in any class, or individual, of the heathen world. As idolaters, they are described by Paul as having "changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipping and serving the creation rather than the Creator ;" and that too despite all the light of God that beams from above, and is reflected around and within them. "So that they are without excuse ; because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God." (Rom. 1 : 18 *seq.*)

2. Neither do these passages yield a gleam of hope to any who neglect the opportunities of their probation, trifle with the means of grace, and die in unbelief and impenitency, in Christian lands. Compared with the heathen, their guilt is aggravated ; and the woes pro-

nounced upon Chorazin and Bethsaida must be their irreversible doom in the day of judgment.

3. There is here no intimation of another probation beyond the grave. Those spirits to whom Christ went and preached will "be judged according to men in flesh;" that is, with sole reference to their conduct, and choice of service, in this life. Their character was fixed unchangeably before they entered Hades. The same must be inferred of all men; and their doom must be as unalterable as their character.

4. The Romish doctrine of purgatory finds no countenance in these passages. There is nothing to suggest any process of purgation for wicked spirits in Hades, nor that any prayers, or masses, or priestly mediation will avail for their deliverance. The course of destiny is settled and sealed when the spirit leaves the body and enters the separate state.

5. The doctrine of final restoration, if applied to wicked spirits in Hades, and more especially if applied to those whose doom has been pronounced at the final judgment and their sentence executed in hell, certainly fails of support here.

Three inferences, specially applicable to the subject of the present chapter, may be legitimately drawn:

1. Careless servants who, in times of general corruption and apostasy, heed not the admonitions and warnings of God's faithful ministers, "neither prepare themselves," expose themselves to consequences corresponding to their neglect in the world of unbodied spirits.

2. Unfaithful servants, who yield to the current of the times, and disobey the voice of God uttered in positive commands and ritual institutions, though, if accepted in-

deed as servants, they will not fail of the final reward of the righteous, will yet suffer loss and be subjected to disabilities, on entering the world of departed spirits. They will not be admitted, without some correction, to full participation in the abode and fruition of the blest. The communications of Noah to which "the spirits in prison" had been disobedient, were of the nature of positive commands, not moral precepts.

3. The spirits of the pious dead in Hades are favored with instruction and discipline, and such appliances as are adapted to their state, to promote their progress in their destined course of immortality. And thus their abode in the intermediate world is made preparatory to the subsequent stages of their eternal development and felicity.

We learn also from Peter and from Jude (2 Pet. 2 : 4 ; Jude 6), that the fallen angels have not yet received their final doom, but are "reserved [kept in custody—*τηρεῖν* in both passages as already defined] unto the judgment of the great day." The rendering of the received version, "cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness," will not bear criticism. *Τατραπώσας* signifies "having cast them down to *Tartarus* ;" but *Tartarus* does not mean "*hell*," the place of the finally damned. In the classics it was used to designate the region of unhappy spirits in Hades in opposition to the Elysian fields, or region of blessed spirits. Whether this name in the classic acceptance preserved a tradition of truth once revealed and known to men, or whether it was taken in accommodation to the inspired idea as the best the language could afford, is immaterial, since the meaning of inspiration is made plain

by the use here compared with other passages relating to the disembodied state. *Tartarus* is here distinctly named as the place of imprisonment of the angels that sinned; till the great judgment day, not as the place of their final doom. Instead of *σειρᾶις*, *chains*, four of the principal mss., A, B, C, and the Sinaitic, have *σειροῖς* = *σιποῖς*, *pits*, *caverns*, or *dens*. This reading, so well authenticated, relieves the text of the incongruous idea "chains of darkness." The whole verse will then read thus: "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but having hurled them down to Tartarus, consigned them to caverns of darkness, kept in custody unto the judgment . . . (ver. 9) the Lord knoweth," etc. And with this Jude perfectly agrees: "And angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has kept in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (Jude 6.)

#### TARTARUS THE NAME OF THE GLOOMY PART OF HADES.

Some have supposed that, as Peter refers in this connection to the sinning angels, Tartarus designates a dark cavern or gloomy depth in Hades, specially assigned to them. But this view is hardly reconcilable with the text or the context. Observe the relation of ideas: (1) "having hurled them down to Tartarus, (2) consigned them to caverns of darkness." Tartarus is therefore the common name of the whole region, or province, of Hades, in which those dark caverns are located. This, as we shall see, corresponds with the New Testament use of *ἄβυσσος*, *abyss*. Moreover, from the manner in which fallen angels and the spirits of ungodly men are

grouped together in both the above passages taken with their contexts, as examples of God's uniform dealings with sinners of either race, and from the revealed fact that sinners of Adam's race will have their *final* doom in the same place with the devil and his angels (Matt. 25 : 41) as also from the classic use of the term, it seems quite certain that Tartarus, in this passage of Peter, designates the same region of death-shade and woe in which Dives "lifted up his eyes, being in torments." It is therefore the Scripture proper name of that gloomy part of Hades in which wicked spirits, human or angelic, have their dreary abode assigned them till the final judgment day. In no other place in the New Testament do we find a name for that part of the realm of the dead. It is here distinctly implied in the verb-form *ταρταρώσας*, "having hurled down to Tartarus."

But, as already intimated, the word *ἄβυσσος*, *abyss*, does seem quite clearly to denote a deeper, darker gulf, a bottomless pit, in Tartarus, specially assigned to Satan and his associate rebel angels. It corresponds, therefore, with the expressions, "caverns of darkness," "under darkness," in Peter and Jude. In our common version, this word is rendered "*deep*" in Luke 8 : 13, Rom. 10 : 7 ; and "*bottomless pit*" uniformly in Revelation. It is to be noted that in Rev. 9 : 1, 2, it is connected in each instance with *φρέαρ*, *pit*, evidently as a genitive of apposition, and is correctly rendered by the Bible Union "*pit of the abyss*." It certainly is not equivalent to *Γέεννα* (*Gehenna*), or the *λίμνη τοῦ πυρός* (*lake of the fire*), as Dr. Edw. Robinson (Lex. New Testament) represents it. Indeed, Dr. Robinson, under the words *ἄδης*, *γέεννα*, confounds all dis-

tinctions on this subject. *Ἀβύσσος* does not, in any instance, denote the place of final doom for angels or for men. It is the place into which, in the vision of John, Satan was cast for his thousand years' imprisonment by the angel who had the key of the pit. But it is not the place of his final doom. After "being loosed out of his prison" and going out to deceive the nations and muster the forces of Gog and Magog, "he was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are ; and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." (Rev. 20 : 10.) Not till then does he receive his eternal doom.

We learn, incidentally, from Luke 8 : 31, that the same dark *abyss* is the appointed place of imprisonment for demons, such as the Legion who possessed the man who dwelt among the tombs in the country of the Gerasenes. For some unknown purpose, they are not closely confined to their Tartarean dungeon, but are permitted to roam abroad on the earth ; and they were particularly active and malignant during Christ's earthly mission, "when the kingdom of darkness concentrated its full power against the kingdom of light." (Lange on Luke 4 : 33.) But they well knew their allotted place, and dreaded its horrors. And they knew the Son of God, and trembled in his presence, lest, with a word, he should remand them to their destined prison. Hence they begged for longer respite. Controlling the consciousness, and speaking with the organs, of the demoniac, "they besought Jesus that he would not command them to go away into the *abyss*." Mark and Matthew convey the same idea, though a little less definitely : "Torment me not" (Mark 5 : 7), "Camest thou hither to torment



us before the time ?" (Matt. 8 : 29)—evidently referring to the torment of the *abyss*, to which they were in dread of being remanded. This could not relate to the final doom of wicked spirits ; for the last judgment will consign them, not to the *abyss* of Tartarus, but to the "lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Hades itself, with all its depths and dungeons, will be cast into the same burning lake. (Rev. 20 : 14.) The demons must know that they are to be judged before entering their final state ; and they must have some idea of the solemn pomp and glorious majesty in which the Judge will appear. Those cast out of this man must, therefore, have known that Jesus, in the humble form before them, had not come to judgment. But this language plainly implies that a time is to come before the general judgment (and that the demons have some indefinite knowledge of that time) when those malignant fiends, emissaries of Satan, "rulers of the darkness of this world," will be banished from the earth to the gloomy *abyss* appointed for their intermediate confinement. Doubtless this banishment will be contemporaneous with the commencement of Christ's millennial reign, the peaceful state of which will be disturbed by no such hostile influences. They will share with their master, the prince of darkness, in his thousand years' imprisonment.

The following extract from Wordsworth on the subject of evil angels is in point here : Comparing also these texts with other portions of Scripture, 1 Pet. 5 : 8, where the devil is compared to a roaring lion, *walking about*, seeking whom he may devour, and Rev. 20 : 7, where Satan is described as loosed, and with the clear assertions of the apostolic writings, describing his present lib-

erty, energy, and influence, and designating him as "the prince of the power of the air" (*ἀέρος* not *αιθέρος*, Eph. 2 : 2) and as "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4 : 4), we must conclude that the *chains* [caverns, A] of *darkness* of which the Apostles Peter and Jude speak, and to which Satan and his associates are now confined, and in which they will be kept even *till the day of judgment*, are of such power as to restrain them forever from recovering their place in the *regions of light*, but not such as to prevent them from exercising great power over those persons in this lower world who allow themselves "to be taken captive by them at their will." (See Wordsworth on Eph. 2 : 2 and Rev. 20 : 1-8.)

#### SHEOL AND HADES.

The passages which have now been examined and compared furnish an infallible clew to the sense of the words *Sheol* and *Hades* throughout the Holy Scriptures. These terms—the one Hebrew, the other Greek—are synonymous. In the Septuagint, *ᾗδης* is almost everywhere put for *הֶעָלִי*, and so also in New Testament quotations.

That these words somehow, or in some sense, or in some uses or connections, designate the state or dwelling-place of disembodied spirits, is affirmed by biblical scholars and expositors generally. But their ideas on this subject seem, in most cases, to be confused and indefinite ; at least the expressions of many of them are so, in a degree which renders their annotations of little service to a practical inquirer. Take the following as specimens of exegetical instruction on this subject :

“*Sheol*, translated ‘grave,’ must here mean the place of the departed. The word seems to signify a hollow, subterraneous place.” (Bible Com. by F. C. Cook, M.A., Canon of Exeter, on Genesis 37 : 35.)

“*In Sheol*, the grave, as a general receptacle, here parallel to *death*, and like it meaning the unseen world or state of the dead.” Alexander on Ps. 6 : 6 (5). Observe here that *Sheol* means, at once, the grave, death, the unseen world, and the state of the dead ! Are these synonyms ? Are they not ideas entirely distinct ?

“In Scriptural language, to descend into Hades or Hell, means nothing more than to descend to the grave, to pass from the visible into the invisible world.” (Hodge, Syst. Theol., vol. ii. p. 617.) On the same page : “To be buried, to go down to the grave, to descend into hell, are in Scriptural language equivalent forms of expression !” If it be true, as many assert, that the English word *hell* originally corresponded to the Hebrew *Sheol* and the Greek *Hades*, that is, that it meant “the unseen world,” the place of departed spirits, still these expositions of Dr. Hodge confound the *grave* with the *invisible world*. They disregard the distinction between the place where the lifeless body dissolves, and the place where the conscious soul survives till the resurrection. His remarks on this subject, whenever he refers to it in his work, are equally confused and contradictory.

Here is another : “*Sheol*, the unknown region into which the dying disappeared. The vague term was capable of becoming more or less definite according to the writer’s thought. Most commonly it was simply the grave, as we use the phrase ; sometimes the state of death in general ; sometimes a dismal place opposed to

heaven ; sometimes a place of extreme suffering." (S. C. B. in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, art. Hell.) "Vague" enough surely ! *Sheol* accommodates itself to every writer's, and it would seem to every reader's, thought and convenience, whether he prefer the grave, the state of death, a dismal place opposed to heaven, a place of extreme suffering, or some other unknown region into which the dead disappear !! The same writer, in the same article, makes *Hades* equally unintelligible and unmeaning.

What can we learn from exegeses and definitions which thus "darken counsel by words without knowledge" or sense ? Are they not positively detrimental to the claims of revealed truth by casting obscurity upon the Word of God and bringing its inspiration into discredit ? And how many such do we meet with !

In our common English version these words are translated *hell* and *the grave* ; and so in the versions of modern languages generally, the corresponding words being used. In three places (Num. 16 : 30, 33 ; Job 17 : 16) *Sheol* is translated *pit*. The Hebrew word occurs 64 times ; is rendered "hell" 31 times, "grave" 30 times, "pit" 3 times. The Greek word occurs 11 times ; is rendered "hell" in all but 1 Cor. 15 : 55. It is important to observe here that, whatever may have been the original meaning of the word *hell*, its received sense, at the time when our version was made, was the place of final punishment, the region of the damned. In this sense, doubtless, our translators used it. If they used it in any other sense, they deceived the people ; for so all understood it.

These renderings in our versions are very unfortunate.

They create confusion and misconception in regard to a matter which is of utmost concern to us, and which it is the special object of revelation to make known, namely, the destiny which awaits men beyond the present life. The readers of versions are everywhere misled by them, and imbibe false and confused notions of coming states of being, which an accurate knowledge of the meaning of the original terms would quickly dispel. And they furnish the foundation for ruinous systems of error.

There is no reason to doubt that these mistaken translations originated in an honest mental process. The state of the dead may be contemplated either with reference to the body, or to the spirit; and the terms significant of that state may easily be understood accordingly, as they will apply in any given connection to the one or the other. Understood as applying to the body, they suggest the idea of the *grave*, to which it is consigned and where it moulders. As applying to the spirit after it leaves the body, they necessarily suggest some place or state of separate spiritual existence: and, in this view, as Sheol and Hades are, in a majority of cases, used with reference to the wicked dead, and that part of the invisible world in which they have their wretched abode, the translators, mistaking the intermediate for the final state of woe, understood and translated "*hell*." Hence, in such passages as Gen. 37 : 35 ; 1 Kings 2 : 6, 9 ; Job 14 : 13 ; 17 : 13 ; Ps. 49 : 14 ; 141 : 7 ; Eccl. 9 : 10 ; Isa. 14 : 11, and others, in which the original term can, without clearly distorting the sense, be referred to the body, they represent it, in the version, by "the grave;" in such passages as Deut. 32 : 22 ; Job 11 : 8 ; Ps. 9 : 17 ; 18 : 5 ; Prov. 7 : 27 ; Isa. 14 : 15 ; Ezek. 31 : 16,

17, and others, in which the word must, to satisfy the context, be referred to the spirit, they represent it by "hell." This method of rendering, it must be seen, is not translation : it is interpretation. It is quite apparent from an examination of the work of our English translators that they put "grave" for the original word wherever they could without open violence to the context ; and some passages hardly escaped such violence at their hands. See as instances Ps. 30 : 3 ; 49 : 15 ; 88 : 3 ; 89 : 48 ; Isa. 38 : 10. In the three places in which Sheol is rendered "pit," probably no very definite sense was attached to it by the translators. In both instances, in Numbers (16 : 30, 33), where it is so rendered, the Hebrew word has the local paragogic ending : it is שְׁאוֹלִים, literally, *Sheol-ward*. It relates to the fate of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram : "The earth opened her mouth and swallowed them up ; and all that pertained to them went down alive *Sheol-ward*."

But if now, discarding all bias and prepossession, and rejecting all gloss, we accept these words in the simple sacred sense so clearly indicated by the Scriptures, heretofore examined and compared, as denoting always the state and abode of the spirits of the dead during the period of disembodiment, the unseen world of spiritual existence intermediate between the present and the final state, they will suit every context, and make sense in every connection, in which they occur. Let us examine some of the passages which may be regarded as least reconcilable with this sense, selecting from those which the translators have been led by the context to render "grave."

Gen. 42 : 38. "Then shall ye bring down my gray

hairs with sorrow to *Sheol*." Words of Jacob on refusing to let Benjamin go with his brothers. See also chap. 44 : 31. Probably no one would understand "gray hairs" here in a literal sense. The phrase is figurative to represent old age, and the abstract is taken for the concrete, as common in Hebrew. The idea is "Ye will bring down *me in my old age*, in sorrow, to the realm of the dead." Dr. Conant renders "underworld." The same explanation applies to 1 Kings 2 : 6, 9, David's charge to Solomon in regard to Joab : "Let not his hoar head go down to Sheol in peace, . . but bring it down with blood." That is, Send him for his crimes, by the hand of the public executioner, to the place of the spirits of the dead.

Ps. 49 : 14, 15. "Like sheep they are laid in the grave ; death shall feed on them ; . . and their form shall consume in the grave from its dwelling, (15) But God will redeem my soul from the grave ; for he will take me." So Conant, with little change from the common version, "Grave" is from *לִמְוֶה* in each instance.

If the last clause (ver. 15) were detached from the others, probably no one would think of translating *Sheol* "grave." It relates to the *soul*, and would be most naturally understood as denoting the place of departed spirits. Dr. Conant would hardly have made this an exception to his common rendering. He would have put it "underworld" as he has in other places where the word is used in relation to the *soul*, Ps. 30 : 3 ; 86 : 13 ; 89 : 48 ; 16 : 10 ; Prov. 23 : 14. We have here the Psalmist's confident anticipation of the resurrection morning when "death and Hades shall give up the dead which are in them" (Rev. 20 : 13), and "God will take"

his children to their final, heavenly home : " God will redeem my soul from Sheol. He will take me."

But as the 15th verse is antithetic to the 14th, *Sheol* must have the same sense in both ; otherwise the antithesis between the state of the righteous and the state of the wicked, which is the leading thought of the passage, would be lost. Observe, too, that this last verse (15) is of simple construction in the original, and therefore furnishes the true key to the other, which is confessedly obscure. But there is little obscurity in the use of *Sheol* in the first part of the 14th verse. The translation loses entirely the pastoral figure in which the thought is clothed in the Hebrew. Preserving the figure, it will read : " Like a flock they are put into *Sheol* : death shall feed them." Gesenius (sub voce רָעָה) translates and explains thus : " רָעָה מָוֶת, death feedeth (pastureth) them, *i.e.*, in *Sheol*, like a flock ; see the preceding clause." So also Alexander. The wicked are represented as a flock in the place of departed spirits, and death as their shepherd to feed them. Fearful representation !

The intervening clause makes a part of the antithesis ; and it refers also to the previous description of the presumptuous wicked : " Their inward thought is that their houses will be forever, their dwellings to all generations," ver. 11. Render thus as hinted by Alexander : " *Sheol* is to consume them from their dwelling to itself." The whole will then read thus : " Like a flock they are put into *Sheol* : death shall feed them. . . . *Sheol* is to consume them from their dwelling to itself. But God will redeem my soul from *Sheol* ; for he will take me." *Sheol*, therefore, has here its invariable sense, the place of departed spirits.



Ps. 141 : 7. "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth," etc. Bones are naturally associated with the grave ; but they are not ordinarily found scattered at its mouth. Indeed, there is an incongruity in the expression, "mouth of the grave." But the grave itself, the repository of the bones of the dead, is very appropriately represented as the mouth or entrance to the abode of separate spirits, "the mouth of Sheol." The Bible Union version translates thus : "As when one furrows and cleaves in the earth, our bones are scattered at the mouth of the underworld." Dr. Alexander gives substantially the same translation, and paraphrases thus : "*Like (one) ploughing and cleaving (making furrows) in the earth, not for the sake of mangling its surface, but to make it fruitful and productive, (so) our bones are scattered at the mouth of hell [Sheol] as the necessary means of a glorious resurrection.*" We may not be disposed to accept the idea of a resurrection from *hell*, as seems to be here suggested ; but if Sheol means that world where the spirits of the dead dwell, and whence they will come forth at the resurrection, all is intelligible and consistent.

On Jonah 2 : 2, it is necessary only to remark that this is a case of hyperbole, common in poetry, sacred as well as profane. So our translators must have regarded it in their rendering "hell."

And now, there is no other passage, in which *שְׁאוֹל* occurs in the Old Testament, or *ᾗδης* in the New, which stands in the way of this one uniform signification of these terms, none in which this sense does not suit the context better than any other. For *grave* there are other words *קֶבֶר*, *שַׁחַת*, *τάφος*, *μνημεῖον* ; for *pit* *בֹּרַי*, *פֶּחַת*, *βόθυνος*, *φρέαρ* ; for *hell* *הַעֲמָת*, *γέεννα*, *λίμνη*

τοῦ πυρός. *Neither SHEOL nor HADES ever signify either hell or the grave.* It may be fairly claimed, now, that they always designate the place assigned to departed spirits during their intermediate state.

It is probably impossible to find a word which may accurately represent *לִישׁוֹן* in translation. It seems to have no proper equivalent, except perhaps in the earlier Aramean languages, in which it has nearly the same form. Whatever may be its etymological descent, it derives its idea from that world unseen which is the subject of human knowledge only by divine revelation. This idea belonged, peculiarly, to the language in which God spoke with men and delivered his oracles. In other languages, though it was not entirely lost, it was corrupted by the myths and fables of false religion; but in the Hebrew it found expression as revealed truth. Even the Greek *ᾠδης* must be divested of its mythical significance, and transformed into a synonym of the Hebrew word; before it could be accepted for the purposes of inspiration in the New Testament. But the difficulty of translation arises, not from any obscurity which rests upon the original idea as expressed and illustrated in the Scriptures, but from the want of a word to convey it. "Underworld" is preferable to the false renderings of the common version; because it may excite inquiry, and so lead to a discovery of the truth. But it conveys no definite sense, and may suggest to some minds an erroneous notion of locality. It needs translation, or interpretation, as much as the original term does. Perhaps it would be best to transfer the original words, and leave them to draw their sense after them through the ordinary methods of exposition, and collation of texts.

While on this part of the subject it would not be proper to pass unnoticed a remark of Dr. Edw. Robinson in his "Lexicon of the New Testament." He says (sub voce *ᾗδης*), "No distinction of places indicated in the Sheol of the Old Testament between the righteous and the wicked." The careful independent student of the Old Testament will hardly assent to this. It is true the passages cited by Dr. Robinson, and a number of others that might be cited, clearly indicate a region of darkness and death-shade where wicked spirits dwell and suffer. Such expressions as, "a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest Sheol" (Deut. 32 : 22), "the sorrows of Sheol encompassed me" (2 Sam. 22 : 6), "deeper than Sheol what canst thou know?" (Job 11 : 8), "the pains of Sheol gat hold upon me" (Ps. 116 : 3), "her guests are in the depths of Sheol" (Prov. 9 : 18), "the wicked shall be turned into Sheol" (Ps. 9 : 17), are of fearful import, and can be understood only of a place of wretchedness and woe. The local comparisons, "depths, deeper, deepest, lowest," give vividness to the description, and cannot be without literal significancy. It has already been admitted that the state of the wicked, and that dreary part of the spirit-world to which they are consigned, is most frequently referred to in the use of the Hebrew word. In the greater number of instances it either relates to the ungodly, or is used in expressions of anguish and despair. For this latter use see 2 Sam. 22 : 6 ; Ps. 116 : 3 ; Job 17 : 13 ; Ps. 86 : 13. But Jacob, mourning inconsolably for his Joseph, could not have thought of Sheol as a place of darkness and sorrow, when he said, "I will go down to Sheol to my son" (Gen. 37 : 35) ; nor Job

when he said, "Oh that thou wouldst hide me in Sheol,—wouldst conceal me till thy wrath is past,—wouldst appoint me a time and remember me" (Job 14 : 13) ; nor David, when he said of his dead child, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Sam. 12 : 23) ; nor Hezekiah, when, recalling his reflections in the near view of death, he wrote, "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of Sheol." These cannot be regarded as expressions of utter despair, or desperation, as they must have been if Sheol was known only as a world of woe prepared for the wicked. They manifest an instinctive love of life, and shrinking from dissolution ; but Sheol presents no images of terror to these good men. They evidently regarded it as a place of deliverance from present sufferings and sorrows. Their thoughts must have been on a place separate and distinct from that into which "the wicked shall be turned—all the heathen that forget God." They must have had knowledge of the *Paradise* of Sheol which is so clearly disclosed in the words of Jesus to the penitent robber, and in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, that happy place where pious souls will dwell with Abraham and lean upon his bosom. Job thought of it as a place of rest from earthly trouble and oppression :

"There the wicked cease from troubling,  
and there the weary are at rest.  
The prisoners are all at ease ;  
they hear not the taskmaster's voice.  
Small and great, both are there ;  
and the servant is free from his master."

(Job 3 : 17 seq.)

But we have the blessed assurance that above and beyond

this intervening state of happy deliverance, in a sphere of transcendent glory and perfection, "there remaineth a rest," a heavenly Sabbath-rest, "for the people of God." There, with restored being, soul and body reunited, and glorified with the image of God, they will live and reign forever.

#### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

"But do not the Scriptures everywhere teach that man's eternal state is fixed unalterably at death?" Certainly they do, if it is meant by this that there is no change in the type of moral character, or in the consequent course of destiny, beyond the grave. And in no other way is this teaching so clearly and forcibly impressed as by the fact revealed that departing spirits, immediately on leaving the body, enter separate departments of the world of spirits, where their condition is preliminary and similar to their future eternal state. The righteous enter an abode of happiness, the wicked a prison-place of woe. But, "after this the judgment." The Scriptures also reveal a great day when all the dead, having been raised and reanimated, shall stand before the throne and be judged, and receive sentence, according to their works. Some have supposed a preliminary judgment at the death of each individual consigning him to his place. But there is very little support for this opinion; though every one's destiny is virtually decided when, by inexorable discrimination of character, he finds his place in Hades: and there will be no reversal of that implied decision. See Chap. 4, No. 2, pp. 175 seq.

But again, "Do not believing souls go, immediately

after death, to be with Christ?" Was not that Paul's expectation when he spoke of his "desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better"? (Phil. 1 : 23,) and when he found pleasure in the thought of being "absent from the body and at home with the Lord"? (2 Cor. 5 : 6-8.) These passages do plainly represent the apostle's anticipation of enjoying, as soon as the soul should leave the body, a more intimate and real presence of Christ than can be experienced in the flesh. But the last quotation explains the first, and shows that he contemplated such a presence as may be enjoyed in a state of "absence from the body." But Paul did not regard that as the final state. He was animated with "the hope of the resurrection," and often looked forward with glowing anticipations to the perfect state beyond, "when this mortal shall have put on immortality," and when the faithful in Christ, with restored and renovated being, body, soul, and spirit reunited, shall enter heaven, and "live and reign with him" forever. (2 Tim. 2 : 11, 12.) We must therefore understand such a "being with Christ," and such communion with him, as is vouchsafed to his saints in the state and place of disembodiment. Believers experience often a joyous sense of their Lord's presence in this world. They will enjoy a far more real, satisfying, perceptible presence of him in the place of happy spirits, as soon as they are released from their prison-house of clay. What may be the precise nature and mode of this manifestation of Christ's presence to the unbodied saints, and whether occasional or continual, is not revealed. It is such a presence as Paul anticipated with inspired delight—a blessed presence of which saints of all ages seem often to be already con-

scious in the moment of dissolution, and which inspires their last utterance, as it did that of the dying proto-martyr, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Perhaps they have bright views opened to them into heaven, as Stephen had when he "saw Jesus at the right hand of God." But it is not that unveiled, heavenly, beatific vision of God which will consummate the blessedness of the saints in their glorified state after the resurrection and the judgment. Of that Paul had a prospective view when, after describing the coming of Christ, and the reception of the saints into his retinue, he added, "So shall we be ever with the Lord," and when he wrote this also: "When Christ, our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (1 Thes. 4 : 17 ; Col. 3 : 4. See also Phil. 3 : 20, 21 ; 2 Thes. 1 : 7 ; James 2 : 5 ; 2 Pet. 1 : 11 ; 1 Jno. 3 : 2.)

#### CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER.

The careful examination and study which have now been given to the teaching of God's Word, on the subject of this chapter, conduct us to the following necessary conclusions :

1. There is a state of existence intermediate between man's present, earthly, and his final eternal state, extending from the death to the resurrection of the body. During that period the spirit subsists while the body is dissolved.

2. There is a place adapted to this intermediate state, called in Hebrew *Sheol*, in Greek *Hades*, where the spirits of the dead dwell during the period of disembodiment. The terms employed, and the relations implied,

as well as the essential nature of the case, involve the idea of locality.

3. This realm of the dead is divided into two regions or provinces : the one called *Paradise*, the abode of pious spirits, where they enjoy a high degree of happiness—as high a degree as spirits separate from the body are capable of enjoying ; the other called *Tartarus*, the abode or prison-place of wicked spirits, a “ place of torment,” where they spend a dreary interim of forlorn existence in darkness and woe, without any possibility of alleviation or comfort.

The deepest, darkest abyss of this region of death-shade is the appointed place of imprisonment for “ the angels that sinned,” where they are to be “ kept in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.”

4. Between these regions “ a great gulf is fixed ” which none can pass from either side to the other, though they may approach near enough, on opposite sides, to see each other and hold converse together.

5. The spirits of the departed, in that world of separate existence, retain their consciousness unabated, probably intensified by release from the intervention of gross material organism. Lazarus “ is comforted ” and happy in the society and affectionate intercourse of congenial spirits like Abraham, and in participation with them in all the enjoyments of the intermediate Paradise : Dives “ is tormented in flame,” and agonized with regretful, remorseful, memories of his former state. There is no place for *psychopanychy*, or soul-sleep. Both are in possession of undiminished consciousness. The one has awakened to pleasure, the other to pain ; the one is



happy, the other is miserable. And such is the general representation of the Holy Scriptures.

6. Memory and personality are unimpaired in Hades. It is a place of recognition. The separated spirits, awaking in that world from the momentary stupor of death, know and are known. Former friends and acquaintances are recognized, and associated in memory with the fortunes of earth ; and the spirits of the pious dwell together in happy relations in the Paradise prepared for them. The relations, and possessions, and conditions, and events of the former life are remembered. Abraham said, " Child, remember that thou receivedst thy good things in thy lifetime, and Lazarus likewise evil things." There seems to be a supernatural power of recognition : for, not only did Dives recognize Lazarus whom he had known in the flesh, but Dives and Abraham knew each other at first sight. So, under the ecstatic influence attendant on the Saviour's transfiguration, which seemed for the time to remove the veil of flesh and leave the spirit to its free vision, Peter, James, and John knew Moses and Elijah.

7. The happy dwellers in the intermediate Paradise enjoy frequent visits, probably the constant intercourse of angels. We know from the case of Lazarus that pious spirits are conveyed by angels to that happy place. We know, too, that " they are all ministering spirits, sent forth for ministration on account of those who are to be heirs of salvation," even while in the flesh. (Heb. 1 : 14.) We can hardly suppose that this angelic guardianship and ministration ceases when the soul is conveyed to its temporary dwelling-place. We must suppose rather that those heavenly ministers and attendants assume more in-

timate relations to the heirs of salvation, associating with them, as spirit with spirit, in visible forms, and familiar modes of communication.

8. The spirits of the saints, while absent from the body, dwell (*ἐνδημῆσαι*) in some satisfying sense with the Lord. (2 Cor. 5 : 6-8.) They enjoy happy manifestations of his presence and sweet communications of his love ; but not that glorious presence which they will behold in unveiled brightness when they shall be with him in the perfect state. (John 17 : 24.) See also third inference from exposition of " spirits in prison," p. 66.

#### GENERAL REMARKS.

These conclusions seem to be legitimately drawn from the Word of God. It must be apparent to any attentive reader of the foregoing pages that they are presented as the result of a careful, candid, independent course of investigation.

A misunderstanding of the words, and consequent misinterpretation of the passages, which relate to the state of the spirit during the period of its separation from the body, have given rise to grave errors. These errors are traceable to versions and commentaries, chiefly those of comparatively modern date. The primitive Christians understood this subject. They received it, with other doctrines, from the original Scriptures or from inspired teachers, or, for some time after the apostolic age, from ministers who were familiar with the languages of the originals, especially the Greek. The writings of the earlier Fathers are plain on this subject. True, this doctrine began soon to be corrupted, and became the

prolific parent of illegitimate speculations and superstitious fables. We may learn this, *ad nauseam*, from the notes to Hagenbach's History of Doctrine. He has collected all that is worth the trouble of knowing of priestly, monkish, and scholastic frauds and vagaries relative to this subject. But the main idea of a distinct state and place of disembodiment was preserved, and generally received, up to the time of the Reformation.

The perversion of the doctrine of the intermediate state, by papists, into the abominable impositions and shameful abuses of their purgatory, for the base purposes of power and extortion, drove many of the Reformers to the extreme of rejecting or ignoring it altogether. Protestant translators and commentators very generally have shown the effect of prejudice or timidity, or confusion of thought, in rendering words and expounding passages which relate to the future states. There seems to be very little, if any, discrimination between the intermediate and the final. Distinctions clearly marked in the Scriptures are overlooked, and the two states of future being are utterly confounded. Even the version of the Bible Union fails of independent uniformity in one important passage, Ps. 49 : 14, 15. And in another equally important, 1 Cor. 15 : 55, a recent indefensible criticism is accepted, and "death" substituted for *Hades*, notwithstanding *Sheol* is the word in the original passage (Hos. 13 : 14) and *Hades* in the LXX. : "O death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?"

In the true light of Bible teaching on this subject, neither the doctrine of the sleep of the soul, nor of the annihilation of the wicked, could possibly survive. The

souls of the wicked, as well as the righteous, continue in a state of conscious being during their separation from the body, and are reserved unto the judgment of the great day. But why are they raised from the dead, and arraigned before the throne of judgment? Is it merely to close their destiny, and consign them to annihilation with a grand display? Will they, by the awards of the judgment, cease to be "vessels of wrath," any more than the righteous will cease to be "vessels of mercy"?

Modern Universalism, in all its shades and phases, owes its prevalence more to the mistranslation and misconstruction of words and passages which relate to the intermediate world than to any other source of argument. The word *hell*, as we find it translated from Sheol and Hades, stands in connections which are utterly irreconcilable with the idea of the final, eternal, state of the damned or of any fixed state. In the maze of contradictions and absurdities which is created by thus confounding things which are essentially different, honest minds are bewildered and become the victims of insidious error. The common idea, which distinguished theologians pronounce "Protestant and orthodox," that the soul on leaving the body passes immediately to heaven or hell, its final place or state, aggraves the confusion and embarrasses inquiry. From want of discrimination between the intermediate and the final state of the wicked, between their condition before and after the judgment, the doctrine of final recovery and universal salvation may, by a very natural and honest mental process, be received as consonant with the Scriptures. A proper distinction of biblical terms, and such a correction of the prevailing orthodoxy as would bring it into harmony with

the true Bible teaching on this subject, would free candid inquirers from all such delusions and convince them of the truth.

The general resurrection consequent upon Christ's victory over the power of death will include the wicked as well as the righteous, the soul as well as the body. At the sound of the last trump *all* the dead shall be raised. Their bodies shall come forth from the grave, their souls from Hades, and be reunited preparatory to the general judgment. And thus "as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive." "For the trumpet shall sound, and the dead [*all* the dead] shall be raised incorruptible." (1 Cor. 15 : 22, 52.) But this is only preliminary to the judgment, when the final sentence of all will be pronounced. "Death and Hades shall give up the dead that are in them : " but then, after that, "They shall be judged according to their works" (Rev. 20 : 13) ; and in execution of the judgment, "the wicked shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life." (Matt. 25 : 46.)

The several topics here suggested will be considered, each in its proper place. The first will be next in order.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### THE RESURRECTION.

THE doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is known only by divine revelation. Our intuitions cling to the idea of restored life and being ; but though tenacious, we can hardly trust them as indubitable. What we

gather from nature, though in a high degree instructive and suggestive, amounts to nothing more than strong antecedent probability. Reason and analogy yield confirmation strong ; but their conclusions are indefinite and uncertain. All that can be obtained from these sources has been drawn out by heathen sages and philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato, and Cicero, and amounts simply to this : There is very strong probability that we shall live again after death. Even this probability contemplated only the future life of the soul : the reanimation of the body seems scarcely to have been thought of, except as a poetic fiction. All beyond this, in the heathen creed or hope, must be regarded as traditional, and derived originally from revelation.

**SPECIALLY A BIBLE DOCTRINE.**

For the sure hope and promise of the resurrection we must turn to the Holy Scriptures. The doctrine is revealed, though somewhat dimly, in the inspired Hebrew writings ; but it is definitely and distinctly taught only in the New Testament. It is the crowning hope of the Gospel. Mahomedanism received it from the Scriptures through the corrupt channel of tradition, and with the additional corruption of pagan myths and visions of the false prophet. The pagan world classed it among the extravagant fictions and fancies of their poets and mythologists ; they never thought of it as a tenet of faith. The attitude of the most enlightened pagan minds on this subject was shown when Paul preached to the Athenians on Mars' Hill. When, in his encounter with the Epicureans and Stoics in the market-place, " he

preached to them Jesus and the resurrection," they took hold of him and brought him upon Areopagus, and said tauntingly, "May we know what this new doctrine is whereof thou speakest? For thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know therefore what these things mean." And then they listened till he came to speak again of the resurrection of the dead, when they interrupted him, and "some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter." (Acts 17 : 17 seq.) The man who preached such a doctrine was regarded by them as either a bold impostor, or (at best, supposing him to be sober and serious) a crazy fanatic and superstitious babbler.

It has sometimes been asserted that under the old dispensation nothing was revealed concerning the resurrection of the dead; that God's ancient people had, at most, only a faint anticipation of a future life of the spirit, and knew nothing of renewed being beyond the grave, and therefore nothing of the heavenly state. It is true that the blessings promised to Israel on condition of obedience, and the curses threatened for disobedience, were mostly of a temporal nature, and had special reference to their state in the land of their inheritance. But it is also true that the faithful servants of God of every ancient period understood the promises made to them as having a typical as well as a literal import, and so reaching forward and embracing "good things to come," richer blessings in reserve for them, in a better world than this. Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah,— "these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having hailed them from afar, and confessed that they were strangers and sojourners on the earth.

For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country, a better, that is a heavenly country," in which, by their lives of faith and piety, they sought to secure a possession. Abraham, while "dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise, looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. 11 : 4 seq.)

That holy men of old were cheered by the hope of the resurrection is manifest also from contemporary Scriptures, such as these: "If a man die shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come. Thou wilt call and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands." (Job 14 : 14, 15.) "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he will stand in the latter day upon the earth; and after my skin,—let them destroy this; and [yet] from my flesh shall I see God." (Job 19 : 25, 26.) [This translation is entirely literal. It is suggested in Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, vol. iv. p. 2709. There is an *anacoluthon* after the word "skin." Had the sentence been completed as begun, we should probably have found the verb *ἔσθ' ἡ* which follows, in the passive, "after my skin is destroyed," *cut off*, as the word signifies. "From," with reference to place or state in the restored being. So Rosenmüller, et al.] "As for me," says the Psalmist, "I shall behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." (Ps. 17 : 15.) "Thy dead shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs and the earth shall cast out the dead." (Isa. 26 : 19.) "O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come



up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel." (Ez. 37 : 12.) "And many that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. 12 : 2, 3. Also Hos. 13 : 14, et al.) We know, too, that the Pharisees, "the strictest sect of the Jewish religion," to which belonged the best men of the nation, held firmly the doctrine of the resurrection, having derived it from the Old Testament Scriptures. (Acts 23 : 6-8 ; 24 : 14, 15, 21 ; 26 : 4-8. See also Matt. 22 : 23 seq. ; Mark 12 : 18 seq. ; Luke 20 : 27 seq. ; John 11 : 24.)

Such Scriptures as those just quoted can have no rational interpretation except as referring to the resurrection and reunion of body and spirit, and a transition into a new and higher life. But these, and all other allusions to the subject in the Old Testament, are indirect and incidental. For a distinct and positive announcement of the doctrine we are indebted to the New Testament. "Christ has abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the Gospel." (2 Tim. 1 : 10.) Jesus said, "The hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and shall come forth" (John 5 : 28, 29) ; and "I am the resurrection and the life : he that believeth in me, though he be dead, yet shall he live and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John 11 : 25, 26.) And the great and constant theme of apostolic preaching was "Jesus and the resurrection," the "risen Christ as the first fruits of them that slept," and the complete victory and final triumph of Jesus, the Conqueror, over death, in the final resurrection, through him, of all the dead. The power of his resurrection extends to all our race.

"As the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will." (Jno. 5 : 21.) "They preached through Jesus the resurrection of the dead." (Acts 4 : 2.) It was for this purpose that he put on human flesh : "Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same ; that through death he might destroy him who hath the power of death, that is, the devil, and might deliver those who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2 : 14, 15.) The resurrection of all the dead is involved in the fact of Christ's resurrection ; and on this depends the whole credibility of the Gospel. So Paul argues : "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen : and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. And we also are found false witnesses of God ; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ, whom he raised not up if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, neither has Christ risen ; and if Christ has not risen, your faith is vain. . . But now has Christ risen from the dead, the first fruits of those who slept. . . For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Cor. 15 : 13 seq.) "For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (Vers. 52, 53.)

Hence the resurrection of Christ was made the special subject of apostolic testimony ; and to "have seen the Lord Jesus Christ," and to be able, from personal knowledge, to bear witness to his resurrection,

were essential qualifications for the apostolic office. It was in this fundamental relation to the Christian faith, with special reference to the Saviour's "power to lay down his life and to take it again" (Jno. 10 : 18), manifested in the reanimation of his body, and its coming forth from Joseph's tomb, showing his superiority over death and his power to raise all the dead, that the apostles were to be "witnesses of his resurrection." (Luke 24 : 48 ; Acts 1 : 8 ; 2 : 32 ; 3 : 15 ; 5 : 32 ; 10 : 39, 41 ; 13 : 31 seq. ; 22 : 15 ; 26 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 9 : 1, et al.) How faithfully and confidently and boldly the apostles bore this testimony, is seen in their lives and writings.

It is not a little strange that there are men who profess to believe the Christian revelation, and yet deny or question the resurrection of the body. Nothing is more distinctly revealed and positively taught in the Holy Scriptures than this. To admit the fact of the resurrection of Jesus and doubt its efficacy to raise all the dead, is to put asunder what God in the plan of redemption has indissolubly joined together, as cause and effect. "He is the first-born from the dead." (Col. 1 : 18 ; Acts 26 : 23 ; Rev. 1 : 5.) As the second Adam, he is "a life-giving spirit" to all our race. No believer in the veracity of the New Testament will deny that the body of Jesus was raised from the dead. This historic fact is attested by those who were intimately acquainted with him, who witnessed his crucifixion and burial, and "to whom also he showed himself living after he had suffered, by many infallible proofs, during forty days appearing to them, and speaking the things concerning the kingdom of God." (Acts 1 : 3.) But this antecedent fact admit-

ted carries with it as a necessary consequent the resurrection of the bodies of all the dead.

## DIFFICULTIES MET AND ANSWERED.

Those professed Christians who reject this doctrine seem, instead of standing by the plain declarations of God's Word, to give undue force to certain alleged philosophical difficulties and objections. For a fair statement and concise but decisive answer to all the principal objections of this kind, the reader is referred to Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, art. Resurrection. But really only two of these assumed difficulties have a sufficient coloring of philosophy to merit refutation. These, with some abbreviation, are inserted here :

1. "It is objected that the same particles may have constituted a part of several successive human bodies at the moment of their dissolution ; and therefore it is impossible that each of these bodies should be raised identical with that which was dissolved. This brings the idea of the resurrection of the identical body nearer to an apparent *contradiction* than any other form of objection that we know of.

"There are at least two ways of answering this objection. (a) However likely the alleged fact may be, unless its absolute certainty can be demonstrated, there is room left for the possibility of the contrary. How can we know but that God so watches over the dust of every human body, and so guides it in all its transmigrations, that it shall never constitute a part of any other human body when that body dies ? Thus the objection is answered by demanding proof of the alleged fact on

which it is based. (b) As our bodies are constantly undergoing change while we live without being thereby destroyed or losing their identity, so the identical body being raised, it may undergo an instantaneous change to an indefinite extent. It may therefore be instantly divested of any particles which may be required for the reconstruction of another body ; and this last being reconstructed, any needed particles may be transferred to a third ; and so on to any extent. We have only to suppose, therefore, that the bodies of mankind shall be raised successively, in the order of their dissolution (at intervals however small, infinitely small if you please, so that there shall be a practical simultaneousness) ; and though a certain particle should have passed through a series of any number in six or eight thousand, or a million of years, yet it may be caused to circulate through the whole number again as they may be successively raised, in less than the millionth part of the least assignable instant of time ; for no limit can be set to the possible rapidity of motion. Thus the objection is answered, admitting the allegation on which it is based.

“ 2. The above objection proceeds upon the assumption that the resurrection of this identical body necessarily involves (1) that the body raised must be identical with the body as it existed and was constituted *at the moment of death* ; and (2) that in order to be thus identical, it must consist of *the very same particles* inclusively and exclusively, arranged in the *very same positions*, combinations, and relationships. We deny both these assumptions : and we assert that in order to a resurrection of this identical body, in a true, scriptural, and human sense, it is neither necessary that the body raised should

be identical with *the precise body which expired the last breath*, nor that it should be *identical with any body* whatever in so strict a sense as that demanded.

“ The first point may be settled at once. Here is a man at the age of thirty years, in perfect health and soundness of body and mind. Before he dies he may lose his arms or his legs ; he may become blind and deaf, or a maniac ; he may die in utter decrepitude. Now, if, at the last day, the body given him should be identical with his present body instead of that mutilated or decrepit frame with which he will have died, would there be no resurrection of the body,—of his own proper body ? Would it be a ‘ new creation ’ instead of a resurrection, simply *because* the raised body would not be identical with the body precisely as it existed and was constituted at the moment of death ? Does a man’s body never become *his own* until he dies—until he loses possession of it ? What becomes, then, of all the horror so often expressed at the imagined reappearance of the lame, the blind, the halt, the withered, the crippled, the maniac, the savage ? Why not insist also upon the resuscitation of the fevers and ague fits, the cancers and leprosies, the gout and rheumatisms, and all the mortal diseases and ills the flesh was heir to at the moment of death ? In short, why not maintain that, if the body is raised at all, it must be, when raised, *in the very act of dying again* ? for the internal states are as essential to identity as the external features !

“ We turn now to the second point, namely, that, in order to a proper resurrection of the body, it is not necessary that the body raised should be identical with any former body whatever, in such a sense that it must

consist of precisely the same elementary particles, neither more nor less, arranged in precisely the same positions, combinations, and relationships.

“ Now it is a well-known fact that not only does a great change take place in our bodies between the periods of infancy and old age, but while we live they are constantly in a process of change, so that the body which we have at one moment is not perfectly ‘ identical ’ with that which we had at any preceding moment. Some physiologists have estimated that every particle of our material frame is changed in the course of about seven years. From this fact it follows that no person ever wakes with that identical body with which he went to sleep ; yet the waking man does not fail to recognize himself. But according to this strict notion of identity, as often as the body sleeps it sleeps an eternal sleep, and the body with which a man awakes is always a ‘ new creation ; ’ for the body which wakes is never ‘ identical ’ with that which was lulled to slumber ! Surely such absurdities will not be maintained. We will suppose, therefore, the body which rises to differ from the body which lived before *only to the same extent* as the body which wakes differs from the body which fell asleep ; would there then be a resurrection of the body in any proper sense ? If so, then our proposition is established and the opposite assumption is overthrown. And besides, a principle is thus gained which reaches much farther than is barely necessary to overthrow that assumption : for if a slight difference is consistent with such a practical and substantial identity as is required for a proper resurrection of the body, will any one tell us precisely the limit of this difference ? except that

there must be some organic or real historical connection, something continuously in common, between the body which is raised and that which lived before? And so much we shall certainly maintain.

“It is plain, therefore, that the resurrection of the same body, and the restoration of conscious perfect identity, do not require that the body raised should have all the matter or the precise form of the present body as it actually existed here at any period of life. It would be a resurrection of the body, and of the same body, if all the bodies of the dead should be raised in the vigor and beauty of youth or early manhood, the infant being instantaneously developed to such a stature, the aged restored to it, and all deformities and defects forthwith removed.” (Vol. iv. p. 2716 seq.)

Nor would this interfere in the least with personal recognition in the future life. The raised bodies sustaining in their renovated being *such* a relation to their former state, will not, in the very nature of the transition, lose their outward identity of form. Those traits and features which were the basis of recognition in the former life will not be effaced or obscured, but find truer, more distinct expression when the face and form of clay shall be freed from its imperfections, and perfected human forms shall be seen by perfected human eyes. The characteristic form and features are not lost in the changes which the body undergoes in successive years of this life, and there is no more reason to suppose they will be lost in any change attendant on the resurrection. And “the spiritual body may have an intensity and transparency of expression for the character and individuality of the soul, such as the brightest mortal face



we ever beheld, the clearest and most soul-expressive eye of mortal mould into whose depths we ever gazed, could not enable us to conceive." (Idem.)

From all such difficulties and objections, destitute as they prove to be of any foundation even in sound human philosophy, we turn again to the Word of God, with the single passing reflection, that "the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." (1 Cor. 1 : 25.) Omnipotence is pledged for the resurrection of the body, "that our faith might not be in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (2 : 5.)

Perhaps there are no greater difficulties than those which may be supposed to originate in the complicated and irregular relations of life; and of these the Sadducees produced for our Lord a hard example in the case of the woman who had been, by the provision of the law, successively the wife of seven brothers. "In the resurrection whose wife shall she be?" The reply is sufficient to meet this, and every other difficulty: "Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God." (Matt. 22 : 29.) If the Scriptures clearly teach the doctrine, and "the power of God" is engaged to raise the dead, what room is there for doubt or question on the subject? Can any difficulty baffle divine power and wisdom? Cannot God rectify all the disorders, and regulate all the complications, which are incident to the earthly term of our being. Can he not for this purpose meet every exigency? The laws of nature are but expressions of his will. Every particle and element of matter in all its transmigrations is within his omniscient view and obeys his will. Surely, "he who formed our bodies

first" can restore them from the ruin of death to his own perfect image if he please. Paul's question before Agrippa appeals to every one's reason: "Why is it judged incredible with you if God raises the dead?" (Acts 26 : 8.)

#### THE CROWNING EVENT OF REDEMPTION.

The resurrection of the dead is the grand, ultimate, crowning event in the work of redemption. When Jesus came forth from the tomb he gave the utmost proof of divine power, and determined forever his claim to be the Son of God. Hence the apostle says, "Who was defined the Son of God in power, as to Spirit of holiness [his divine holy nature], from the resurrection of the dead." (Rom. 1 : 4.) That is, his divine Sonship was definitely settled beyond question or query, by the power which is manifested in the resurrection of the dead—not alone, observe, in his own resurrection *from* the dead, but in the resurrection *of* the dead [*ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν*], *i.e.*, of all the dead, which is implied and comprehended in his own resurrection. (1 Cor. 6 : 14 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 14 ; Eph. 1 : 19, 20.) This he claimed when He said, "I am the resurrection and the life" (Jno. 11 : 25. See also John 5 : 26 ; 6 : 33 ; 10 : 10); and his resurrection confirmed all his claims and pretensions. And in this comprehensive sense the proof of his divinity "from the resurrection" is analogous to the proof of his humanity "from the seed of David," *i.e.*, from natural descent. (Rom. 1 : 3, 4.) The general resurrection, which was fully guaranteed when Jesus rose from the dead, will be a complete victory over death and over that malignant adversary who, as the author

of sin in our world, introduced "death and all our woe"—such a victory as none but God could achieve. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." With the subjugation of death "all enemies will be put under his feet;" his mediatorial work will be accomplished, and "he will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father." "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then will be brought to pass the saying that is written: Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O Hades, where is thy victory?" (1 Cor. 15 : 25 seq.)

#### THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE.

"*The resurrection of LIFE*" affords to the believer his most animating hope. It is the triumphant hope of the Gospel. It is the end of the reign of death, the end of every ill, and the beginning of life eternal. It is the grand achievement of divine grace in the plan of redemption, exhibiting the finished work of the Redeemer, "that as sin has reigned in death, so also might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 5 : 21.) This blessed hope deprives death of his terrors and meets the instinctive longing of the soul for immortality.

No wonder that the hope of the resurrection engaged Paul's strongest aspirations. "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being conformed to his death; if by any means I may attain unto the resurrection of the dead." (Phil. 3 : 10, 11.) That Paul referred to "the resurrec-

tion of *life*'' is plain from his regarding it as an object desirable to be attained, and of which, as the language implies, the faithless will fail. The apostle seemed to keep this hope always in view. It was the grand theme of his preaching, for which he exposed himself to bitter opposition and persecution from both Gentiles and Jews. It gave him courage in danger, fortitude in suffering, boldness in defence of the truth, support in trial, solace in affliction. Before the exasperated Sanhedrim he "cried out, Concerning the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question." (Acts 23 : 6.) When accused by Tertullus before Felix, he made in his defence bold professions of his "hope toward God that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust." (Acts 24 : 15.) When answering for himself before Agrippa, he gave prominence to the same hope of the Gospel. (Acts 26 : 6-8.) When, in writing to the Thessalonians, he would comfort the mourners among them and quiet all anxiety about the departed, he turned their thoughts for consolation to the same cheering hope : "Concerning those who are asleep, sorrow not as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and arose, so also those who fell asleep will God, through Jesus, bring with him." (1 Thess. 4 : 13, 14.) And to this corresponds the apostle's ardent expression "hope of eternal life." (Titus 1 : 2 ; 3 : 7.)

#### THE RESURRECTION OF DAMNATION.

"*The resurrection of DAMNATION*" [John 5 : 29, *κρίσεως*, *judgment*, here, is the antithesis of *ζωῆς*, *life*, therefore = *judgment of death or damnation*. See p. 43],

on the other hand, is a fearful subject to contemplate. It ought to excite terror in the minds of those who are rejecting Christ, or neglecting the salvation which is provided in him alone ; and it would if they were duly sensible of their exposure. It is preparatory to their arraignment before that solemn tribunal which will consign them to "outer darkness," to "eternal punishment," to the unmitigated horrors of "the second death." The Son of God, by his gracious interposition in behalf of our ruined race, has unbarred the doors of the tomb and the gates of Hades. It was the grand design of his earthly mission "to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound" (Isa. 61 : 1) ; "to say to the prisoners, Go forth ; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves" (Isa. 49 : 9) ; "to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." (Isa. 42 : 7. See Luke 1 : 79 ; 4 : 18 ; Heb. 2 : 14, 15.)

Such Scriptures doubtless point to a greatly ameliorated condition of human society under the Gospel. They include that, but only in a subordinate sense. They mean more than any mere temporal consummation. The principal idea is that every vestige of the first death, that is of the work of death in this world, shall be swept away ; that the mighty Deliverer shall break every chain ; and throw open every prison door of the dead, and release every victim of the first, or earthly, reign of death, so that all alike, the unjust as well as the just, may come up freely, and stand on equal footing before the throne of judgment to receive their ulterior doom. In view of his finished redemptive work, the Saviour said to John in the vision of Patmos, "I am the first and the last and

the living one ; and I became dead, and behold I am alive for evermore ; and I have the keys of death and Hades." (Rev. 1 : 17.) And "he opens and no one shall shut, and shuts and no one shall open." (Rev. 3 : 7.) No bolt or bar of death shall withstand him. He will open every prison in the gloomiest region of Hades, and "say to the prisoners, Go forth." "He will ransom them from the power of Sheol ; he will redeem them from death." (Hos. 13 : 14.) Thus "he gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time." (1 Tim. 2 : 6.) The power of his resurrection will resuscitate *all* the dead, "both the just and the unjust." (Acts 24 : 15.) "All in Christ shall be made alive." (1 Cor. 15 : 22.) Thus Emmanuel, God in our flesh, delivers all the race from the first death, that reign of death which was the immediate consequence of the entrance of sin into our world ; and in this sense "abolishes death," and the salvation of all is made possible on the terms and conditions offered in the Gospel. Without this gracious deliverance *none could* have been saved ; with it *all may* be saved—not unconditionally, but on the specified conditions of "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (Acts 20 : 21.) If these conditions be not complied with, "Christ will profit you nothing" in the day of doom. There will be no final benefit from Christ's victory over death to those who neglect the opportunities of their probation here. There is a temporary benefit to them while God in the exercise of his long-suffering, "waits to be gracious," and postpones the execution of sentence. For "he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John

3 : 18.) But, by rejecting the conditions of salvation, they make the deliverance which Christ has effected the occasion of their deeper ruin. The Gospel, with all its rich provisions of grace, becomes to them "a savor of death unto death." Another reign of death will await them. Their temporary deliverance from the dominion of death, including, in its complete realization at the resurrection, the restoration of their whole being from the ruin of the first, or earthly, work of death, was designed on condition of faith in the great Deliverer during their earthly probation, to afford them the opportunity of securing eternal life ; but, through their neglect of the means of salvation thus made available to them, it will only prepare them to feel, with intensified consciousness, the interminable woes of the second death.

But on a subject so momentous the mind is naturally and properly inquisitive. It is a matter of eternal concernment. We want to know all we can about it, and we ought not to be satisfied nor remit our inquiries till we understand all that God has revealed. What will be the constitution of our renewed being ? Shall we be the same again, with all the characteristics of our former state ? Or shall we be changed ? and if so, what will be the nature of the change ? Let us still consult the divine oracles, remembering that we have no other source of certain knowledge on the subject. And may the Holy Spirit give us light.

HOW, AND WITH WHAT BODY, DO THE DEAD RISE ?

Paul's declaration, " This I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," seems,

when isolated from the context, almost like a dogmatical denial of the resurrection of the body. And so some have construed it. But, taken in its connection, it cannot be so understood. The whole chapter (1 Cor. 15) is an argument for the resurrection of the body specially. The apostle, with the authority of inspiration, affirms emphatically, and explains and defends the doctrine, and replies to objections. It does not appear that there was any dispute among Christians about the future life of the *soul*: even the heathen generally admitted that. What the false teachers at Corinth denied (ver. 12) was the restoration of the *body* to life. This heresy, which sprang up so early and was soon after developed by the Gnostics, is combated by Paul throughout the chapter.

But that declaration of the apostle seems to have a basis of sound philosophy. Reason suggests that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God;" and this proposition is expressed in plainer terms, and in more logical form, in the parallel clause, "neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." It seems obvious that a crude material organism could not conform to the conditions nor sustain the relations of the heavenly state. It is true we have no actual or experimental knowledge of these conditions and relations; but we must conceive of them as pure and perfect, adapted to natures exempt from pain and death and every evil, and therefore not suited to a nature exposed, in its elementary constitution, to mortality and corruption. Nothing in such an order of things would be homogeneous with such a nature. Every element and every affinity would be discordant with it. Flesh and blood could receive no avail-



able inheritance in such a world. But this is only speculative, though we accept it as philosophical. In this as in many other subjects of religious inquiry, reason and philosophy grope with but dim light till their way is illumined by divine revelation. We are prepared to adopt the inquiry, "How do the dead rise? And with what kind of body do they come?" and to attend to the apostle's solution of the mystery which confronts us, and learn all we can from the inspired Word.

"Behold," says he, "I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For it is necessary that this corruptible put on incorruption, and that this mortal put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15 : 50 seq.) So then the bodies of all—those who are dead, and those who are alive, at the sounding of the last trump—*will be changed*, to fit them for the enjoyment of that "inheritance which is incorruptible, and undefiled, and unfading, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1 : 4.)

He illustrates this change by referring to the process of vegetation: "That which thou sowest is not quickened unless it die." God has made death the medium of life even in the physical world. "And what thou sowest, thou sowest not the body which shall be, but bare grain, perchance of wheat, or some of the rest. But God gives it a body as it pleased him, and to each of the seeds its own body." (vers. 36-38.) The particular identity is preserved through the whole process. The germ,

the blade, the stock, the ear, preserve throughout not only the genus and the species, but some distinct characteristic of the particular seed. If wheat was sown, not only is it wheat through every stage of its progress, but every plant derives its individuality from the particular kernel from which it grew, with whatever other causes combined. Changed, yet the same ! A mysterious process, yet made up largely of patent facts.

It seems to be the design of the apostle rather to direct our attention to the nature of the mystery than fully to solve it. He would make us feel that no method of solution can bring it directly within the limits of our apprehension ; and yet there are similar facts and processes witnessed all around us, mysterious in their nature, but manifest in their results, and showing the operation of principles and agencies in material nature which seem almost adequate to raising the dead. To say the least, they furnish perfect analogies in living, actual transformations. To these, by his example of vegetable life and transition, illustrating also by reference to the different modes and possibilities of material existence, he directs our thoughts, and then brings out his comparison : " So is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption ; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor ; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a psychical body, it is raised a pneumatical body. If there is a psychical body, there is also a pneumatical body."

These original adjectives are transferred because there are no current English words which will translate them. Spiritual might be substituted for pneumatical, but the antithesis would not be so well sustained as by retaining

both the original words. The nearest approach to a translation, with the sense and force of the original, would be *soul-body* and *spirit-body*. Taking these terms in their original sense, we have here a description of the change which the body will undergo at the resurrection as nearly literal as human language can furnish, brought out and condensed in the clause, "It is sown a *soul-body*; it is raised a *spirit-body*."

This cannot mean, as Swedenborg and some others have fancifully represented it—that there are, by creation and generation, two bodies provided for every soul, one for its occupancy in this world, the other for its occupancy in the world to come, the exchange being made at the moment of death. Nor can it mean, according to Lange's elegant speculation ("Beiträge zu der Lehre von den letzten Dingen," p. 235), that the soul as a sort of immaterial germ of life, or nucleus of being, is endowed with a force or power of accretion, a "*nisus formativus*," by which it will hereafter, as it has here, gather material from surrounding elements and clothe itself in a body suited to its sphere. That would be a new, self-made body, instead of a resurrection of the old one. Nor can it mean, as some others imagine, that the soul on leaving its earthly tenement is immediately, by a new creation or from a stock on hand, furnished with a more refined and ethereal body. Neither of these theories can be reconciled with the plain statement of the passage, repeated in each clause, that the same body which yields to death is restored to life again, the same which "is sowed is raised." Instead of the bodies of our humiliation being changed, they are, according to these speculations, only exchanged.

Neither can it be understood to mean that the body with which the dead will be reinvested will be, in its essential nature and constitution, spiritual. The antithesis forbids this interpretation. The word *πνευματικόν* can with no more propriety be understood as describing the essential constitution of the future body than the word *ψυχικόν* can that of the present body. If *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, *spirit-body*, means a body made out of spirit, *σῶμα ψυχικόν*, *soul-body*, must, by parity of expression, mean a body made out of soul ! But this is a very low grade of nonsense. These terms do not relate to the elementary composition, but to the use and purpose of the body.

But we have in this whole passage (vers. 44-49) a distinct recognition of the tripartite nature of man—body, soul, and spirit. So also in 1 Thess. 5 : 23. And the distinction between the *ψυχή*, *soul*, and the *πνεῦμα*, *spirit*, is made the basis of much evangelical instruction throughout the New Testament, especially in the epistolary writings. (See 1 Cor. 2 : 14, 15 ; Phil. 1 : 27 ; Heb. 4 : 12 ; James 3 : 15 ; Jude 19.) In the two last, “sensual” is from *ψυχικός*. The *ψυχή* is the animal soul, the seat and centre of the animal life, and of the lower, carnal passions, and affections. The *πνεῦμα* is the higher rational, moral nature, the seat and centre of the nobler, purer, holier, desires, passions, and affections. To be governed by those is to be in the image of brutes ; to be governed by these is to be in the image of God. According to Ellicot’s description : “The *πνεῦμα* is the higher of the two united immaterial parts of the nature of man, being the ‘vis superior agens imperans, in homine’ ; *ψυχή*, ‘vis inferior quæ agitur,’ movetur, the

sphere of the will and the affections, and the true centre of the personality." (On 1 Thess. 5 : 23.)

This furnishes the key to the true sense of the passage under consideration. The meaning is that such a change of "flesh and blood" will be effected at the resurrection that the same body which, while it "bore the image of the earthy," was suited to the necessities, and capacities, and proper action, of the *ψυχή*, the *soul-life*, will become at once fitted for the capacities and activities and enjoyments, for all the conditions, and relations, of the predominating *πνεῦμα*, the *spirit-life*, "its organism being conformed, not to an animal, but to a spiritual life." (Alf.) We are not to understand that the soul which dwells in and animates and in so large degree controls the body in this life will be supplanted and superseded by the spirit in the life to come. Body, soul, and spirit will be restored from the wreck of death, and reunited in perfect harmony, in man's renovated being. But the *ψυχή*, that lower immaterial *animus*—(corrupted and perverted by the fall, and prone to seek those things which minister only to the flesh)—which predominates in this body of flesh and blood, will be subordinated to the *πνεῦμα*, that higher spiritual part of our nature by which more immediately we stand related to holy beings, and to which the transfigured resurrection body will be adapted.

We see in this the gist of the apostle's comparison of the present with the future body by virtue of their relation, respectively, to the first and second Adam: "If there is a *soul*-body, there is also a *spirit*-body. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living *soul*." He could only transmit by the laws of generation the

life which he had received, according to the tenure by which he held it : and this is all that was required in his case to perpetuate the race. "The last Adam a life-giving *spirit*." More was required of him to perpetuate the race, already in ruin, than mere transmission of life and nature. He must restore from ruin. He must redeem from death. He must communicate life to the dead. "But the spiritual is not first, but the psychical ; and afterward the spiritual." Πνευματικόν and ψυχικόν are used here in an abstract general sense. Such the apostle means is the natural order ; that which is *animal* precedes that which is *spiritual*. This was obviously the original plan of creation. "God formed the man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life ; and the man became a living soul." The body which God gave to man was psychical, fitted for the ψυχή, and therefore in divine goodness made subject to dissolution by death. Man was thus guarded against worse consequences of the possible predominance of his lower propensities. Had our first parents not sinned, they might have eaten of the fruit of the tree of life, upon which, then, there would have been no prohibition, and experienced, at once, in their bodies the vital change of which the apostle speaks as attendant upon the resurrection, and with their posterity have lived felicitously forever. (See p. 34.) Their bodies would have become immortal and suited forever to their purer, nobler, spiritual nature. And thus, as in the result of Christ's triumph over death in our behalf, there would have been, first the psychical, then the spiritual. Herein the plan of redemption conforms to the plan of creation. What follows in this connection needs little comment :

"The first man [Adam] was of the earth, earthy ; the second man [Christ] was of heaven. As the earthy [Adam] such those also who are earthy [bodies of Adam's posterity on earth] ; and as the heavenly [Christ] such those also who are heavenly [bodies of Christ's risen people glorified like his own in heaven]: And as we bore [in this life] the image of the earthy, we shall also bear [in the life to come] the image of the heavenly."

Probably this mysterious corporeal change, which the apostle assures us is a necessary preparation for an inheritance in the kingdom of God, could not be made plainer to our apprehension than he has made it in the portion of his writings which we have been considering. We have here an instance in which God, by his inspired servant, stoops to reason with us, and seems to be doing all that is possible to reach our apprehension. But if there are mysteries which we cannot penetrate in the processes of nature which come under our daily observation, how can we expect to fathom the deep arcana of spiritual being in the world unseen ? And the apostle makes us feel, by his treatment of the subject, that we can approach as near to an understanding of the one class of mysteries as of the other ; that what we are asked to believe on the authority of revelation, is quite as credible and explicable as what we know is true by observation and experience. More than all, we have the Word of God for the fact ; and we are assured that the power of God is engaged in the process. In numerous places and forms of expression the Scriptures testify that "God raises the dead." These are examples : "God both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his

own power." (1 Cor. 6 : 14.) "If we believe that Jesus died and arose, so also those who fell asleep will God, through Jesus, bring with him." (1 Thess. 4 : 14.) "We shall live with him by the power of God." (2 Cor. 13 : 4.) "He who raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also with Jesus," (2 Cor. 4 : 14)—"Who will change the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working by which he is able also to subject all things to himself." (Phil. 3 : 21.)

It will be observed by every attentive reader that the Scriptures which have been cited as revealing and elucidating the transformation which will be effected in the resurrection body, and showing the necessity of such transformation for the future spirit-life, have primary reference, as the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians has throughout, to the resurrection of the just. But, as already suggested, there will be no difference, in this respect, between the just and the unjust. No distinction between them as to the resurrection-change is anywhere indicated. The efficacy of Christ's resurrection, as a deliverance from the first, or temporal, reign of death, extends impartially to *all* the dead. In this sense "Christ died for all" (2 Cor. 5 : 14, 15); and "All flesh shall see the salvation of God." (Luke 3 : 6.) "There will be (as is true of the bodies of men here) no organic or elementary difference between the reanimated bodies of the righteous and of the wicked." (Alf.) "All will be made alive," and be endued with capacities to receive "the image of the heavenly," and to sustain the relations and participate in the fruition of the heavenly state. And thus, by a general plan, the way of life



is opened and eternal life made available to all. As they all come forth from their graves, and approach the judgment-seat, it will require the omniscient eye of the final judge to "separate them the one from the other." (Matt. 25 : 32.) The diversity of form and state, whatever it may be, will follow the announcement of judgment. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13 : 43.) They will be glorified with Christ. (Rom. 8 : 17, 30.) They will be fitted for heavenly companionship. Of the future form and corporeal state of the wicked in the place of their final doom, nothing is directly revealed. We only know that with bodies no longer subject to dissolution and decay, with a being restored in all its original components beyond the power of death to destroy or separate, they must depart from God and go away into the dreary region and hopeless state of the second death. They must participate in the doom of the enemies of God. They must take up their abode and find their associates in the place "prepared for the devil and his angels;" and it is but reasonable to infer that they will be assimilated to the hideous shapes of such infernal companionship.

#### WILL ALL THE DEAD BE RAISED SIMULTANEOUSLY?

Such will be the nature and manner and process of the resurrection and transformation of the body, and such the constitution and state in which it will be renewed from its ashes, or into which, in the case of the living, it will be changed. So much we learn from the Inspired Word in answer to the questions, "How do the dead

rise ? and with what kind of body do they come ?" But there is another question of very great interest which demands our attention : Will all the dead be raised simultaneously ? or will they be divided into ranks with reference to some distinguishing character, and some enjoy a priority over others in the order of resurrection ?

Some writers have, quite fancifully and without any Scripture warrant, invented a number of grades of rank and succession—apostles, martyrs, eminent saints, faithful teachers, and bold defenders of the faith, etc. Others, as Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, take the opposite extreme, and hold " that the resurrection of the righteous and of the wicked, of all the dead, will be contemporaneous." (Hodge on 1 Cor. 15 : 24, and elsewhere.)

But John reveals distinctly two resurrections at two distinct periods. In the first of these, those only whom he describes as " happy and holy" at the time of its occurrence " have part ;" and " they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." But " the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished." Then it was, in the order of the apocalyptic vision, that he " saw all the dead, small and great, stand before the throne," the sea and death and Hades having given up the dead that were in them, preparatory to the opening of the books and the general judgment. (Rev. 20.) It is very strange that Dr. Hodge should represent inspired language so plain as this as " uncertain and doubtful " in its bearing on the doctrine of the resurrection, and set it aside in view of what he is pleased to call " the plainer declarations of the epistolary portions of the New Testament" ! Where

are those plainer declarations? Certainly they are none of those which he cites; nor could plainer be made.

This revelation to John may be taken as supplementary and explanatory of Paul's statement of the order of the resurrection: "All will be made alive. But each in his own order; Christ the first-fruits; afterward they who are Christ's at his coming. Then [at how long an interval is not named here; but it is called "a thousand years" in the passage in Revelation]—then comes the end, when he delivers up the kingdom to God, the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet." (1 Cor. 15 : 23 seq.)

Many, perhaps most, commentators understand this passage in the light of a military figure, the successive ranks in the order of the resurrection being represented by *τάγμα* in the sense of *bands* or *cohorts*. There seems to be little weight in Dr. Hodge's objection to this that "Christ is not a band." Yet he employs this as an argument against the view that there will be separate ranks and successive periods in the process of the resurrection. But Christ's resurrection (attended probably by the "bodies of the saints which arose and came out of the tombs after his resurrection," Matt. 27 : 52) might with eminent propriety, in accommodation to the figure, be represented as the first band or company of the rising hosts of the dead. As Alford remarks, "This is his *ἰδιον τάγμα*," *his own rank* or *band*.

But there is no need of introducing this figure. The military is not the primary idea of *τάσσω* and its cognates. The leading idea is *order*, either in the sense of command or succession. In this last literal sense it is,

most probably, used here. Nor is there any thing conflicting in the least with the order of the resurrection which the Scriptures now under consideration so clearly indicate in those passages quoted by Dr. Hodge and others as evidence of one general contemporaneous resurrection. It is impossible, within proposed limits, to give special examination to all those passages. Most of them will come up in their proper place as we proceed, particularly those which relate to the time and character of that period called "*the end*," so often foretold in the New Testament. Suffice it to say here, that in the grand panorama of prophecy we know that events separated by long intervening ages are often brought into apparent juxtaposition, thus illustrating the inspired declaration that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Pet. 3 : 8.) Dr. Hodge is duly impressed with this characteristic of prophetic foreshadowing ; and, with true Christian candor, he thus qualifies the opinion he has expressed. "All this, however, is said with diffidence and submission. It may prove to be otherwise. The predictions of the Old Testament produced the universal impression that the first coming of Christ was to be attended at once by events which we learn from the New Testament require ages to bring about." The remark which follows is open to exception : "Still," he adds, "we are bound to take the Scriptures as they stand, and events which are described as contemporaneous are to be assumed to be so until the event proves the contrary." (Idem.) Surely, in a case where, out of a series of prophecies relating to the same events, two or three distinguish them in the order of fulfilment, and separate them by

intervals of time, or if even one does this, without any conflict with those which specify no such distinction and separation, but simply indicate a general or final accomplishment, the order and succession of the events may be anticipated as confidently as the grand consummation may of which each forms a part. It is not necessary in such a case to defer the interpretation till the fulfilment.

Such is the case in hand. The revelations made to John and to Paul respectively are mutually supplementary and explanatory, and they distinguish the order of events in the progress of the resurrection ; and there is no collision between these Scriptures and those others which refer more concisely and less circumstantially to the grand ultimate consummation—the resurrection of the just and the unjust. More than this, those other Scriptures which refer to the subject in a more general manner contain allusions which, as will appear, can be explained only as conforming to the same order and distinction.

It is plain, therefore, from the Word of inspiration that there is to be a first and a second resurrection, separated by an interval of time. But these separate ranks of the raised will not be made up distinctively of the righteous and the wicked, as sometimes represented. The first will consist of "those who are Christ's at his coming," whom John calls "happy and holy;" the second, of "the rest of the dead" at the time of "the end," both righteous and wicked, of course.

That there will be an interval between these events or epochs of the resurrection, is as clearly expressed in Paul's revelation as is the interval between Christ's resurrection and his second coming. Observe the distinct specifications : "Christ the first-fruits : afterwards

[many centuries intervening] they that are Christ's at his coming : then [unknown ages again intervening] cometh the end," all enemies having been put under his feet. But John describes the same events, and indicates their succession more minutely : " I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them (see Matt. 19 : 28) ; and the souls of those beheaded on account of the testimony of Jesus, and on account of the Word of God, and whoever did not worship the beast, neither his image, and did not receive the mark upon their forehead or upon their hand ; [This corresponds perfectly with Paul's concise description, " they that are Christ's at his coming." It only describes more specifically all who have been faithful to Christ and his truth up to the time of his coming], and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. Happy and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection. They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished." (Rev. 20 : 4 seq.) This asserts indirectly that the rest of the dead *did* live, in the vision of the seer, or *will* live, in the real order of time, at *the end* of the period specified. And this corresponds with Paul's utterance, " then cometh the end," etc. This is the second or general resurrection.

This sufficiently defines the successive ranks and stages in the progress of the resurrection by which ultimately all the dead will be raised. These passages from Corinthians and Revelation may therefore be taken as a clew to guide our further inquiries on this part of our subject. As now explained, Paul's succinct statements

comprehend the whole, and suggest the subordinate parts of this topic.

#### I. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

"*Christ the first-fruits*," "who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1 : 18 ; Rev. 1 : 5.) So also in Acts 26 : 23 he is represented as "first from the resurrection of the dead" (πρῶτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν). This does not assert or imply that no dead had been restored to life before the resurrection of Christ. Besides the three instances recorded in the Old Testament (1 Kings 17 : 21 ; 2 Kings 4 : 35 ; 13 : 21), there were the cases of Lazarus, the daughter of Jairus, and the son of the widow of Nain (John 11 : 1 seq. ; Luke 8 : 49 seq. ; 7 : 11 seq.) ; and the fact is stated elsewhere in general, that Jesus and his disciples raised the dead. (Matt. 10 : 8 ; 11 : 5 ; Luke 7 : 22.) But these were special miracles, always having some special design in view. While they exhibited God's power and beneficence, and might perhaps be regarded as pledges of his purpose to raise all the dead, they were but isolated cases, having no connection with the plan and arrangement of the general resurrection. The persons so raised were only restored to a natural mortal life in the flesh, (John 12 : 10) ; their bodies were not changed and fitted for immortality.

But in the execution of the gracious plan formed in the divine counsel, to deliver all our race from the power and dominion of death as exercised over us in this fallen world, Christ was the first to rise from the dead. And he arose as a new head of the race, with life-giving

power, appointed to give life to the world. Thus he was the first-fruit of the universal resurrection harvest ; and we have in his resurrection a pledge and guarantee of the reanimation of all the dead.

The resurrection of Jesus, the God-man, is therefore the grandest event in the history and destiny of humanity. It will be so distinguished and remembered into the ages of ages. It was the beginning of an endless era, of holy, happy development. It opened up new possibilities and prospects before us as a race. It not only proved that Jesus as Son of God had " life in himself, which he had power to lay down and power to take up again," but it confirmed his declaration that all " the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live," (John 5 : 25). It was a victory achieved not only for himself, but in behalf of all the race whose flesh and blood he had assumed and thus rescued from the power of death (Heb. 2 : 14, 15). It laid a solid foundation for the hope of salvation, and made eternal life available to all.

But this " power of his resurrection" has been already considered, and need not be now further dwelt upon. It need only be added here that it is not reasonable to suppose that those " bodies of the saints which came out of the tombs after his resurrection" (Matt. 27 : 52) ever returned to their state of dissolution. Whoever they were and whatever their number, they probably attended him as present trophies of his victory over death, to an abode of blessedness. But no doctrine is involved in this, no argument dependent upon it.



## 2. THE FIRST RESURRECTION.

*"Afterward they who are Christ's at his coming."*

This, according to Paul's classification, is the second rank or division of the quickened dead. But as this is the first grand division of our mortal race awakened to a life of immortality, and the first extensive exercise of Christ's reanimating power in connection with the work of redemption, John calls it "The First Resurrection." (Rev. 20 : 5.) This will take place "at his coming," that is, his *second* coming, when he "will appear a second time," not in humiliation, but "with power and great glory," not "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," but "without sin, unto salvation." (Matt. 24 : 30 ; Heb. 9 : 26-28.)

## CHRIST'S PERSONAL COMING AND REIGN.

The personal coming and earthly reign of Christ are, here and elsewhere, familiarly spoken of as prophetic events well understood and confidently anticipated. Scarcely any thing is more clearly revealed in the Word of God. It is the glowing theme of prophetic description and allusion in the writings of both the Old and the New Testaments. And besides, the primitive disciples were enlightened on this subject by the oral instructions of the apostles. (See 1 Thess. 5 : 2-4 ; 2 Thess. 2 : 5 ; 2 Peter 1 : 16.) Sufficient Scriptural authority on the subject will come in as we proceed ; and some appropriate remarks will be found at the close of this subdivision.

"All who are Christ's"—that is, all who have previously died in the faith of Christ, whether as the Messiah to come or having already come—will be restored to life

and join his glorious retinue at his *παρουσία*, or second coming. John specifies characters and classes ; but his description as well as Paul's (Rev. 20 : 4 ; 1 Cor. 15 : 23, last clause) includes all the pious, all God's faithful children of previous ages, whether of the old dispensations or the new ; for Jesus said, " all thine are mine." All such will have a place in the ranks of the first resurrection. Other Scriptures are of the same import : " When Christ our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3 : 4.) Addressed to those whose " life is hid with Christ in God," and applicable to all such. " What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing ? Are not ye also in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming ?" (1 Thess. 2 : 19.) Paul, as we learn here, expected to meet those converted through his ministry, and present them with rejoicing at the coming of the Lord. The *καὶ*, *also*, indicates that there were others besides the Thessalonians over whom he expected so to rejoice, including all the gathered fruits of his ministry. (See Phil. 4 : 1 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 14.) " This we say to you in the word of the Lord, that we the living who remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God ; and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we, the living, who remain, shall be caught up together with them in clouds to meet the Lord into the air ; and so shall we be ever with the Lord." (1 Thess. 4 : 15 seq.) By the phrase " we the living" the apostle designates believers in Christ who will be alive at the time of his second coming, using the first person, *per com-*

*municationem*, as being himself, then, numbered among the living. This form of expression is so natural and so nearly literal, that the inference drawn from it by some, that Paul expected the Advent to occur in his own lifetime, is hardly worthy of refutation. Moreover, to correct any such misapprehension was the main design of his second letter to the Thessalonians. See particularly the second chapter. But see on this subject Lange's Com. *in loco*. In this passage, therefore, the contrast is not between different ranks and stages of the resurrection, as in Rev. 20 : 4 seq.; but between those saints who will be dead and those who will be alive at the time of the *parousia*. The rising of the dead and the rapture into the air of the living, are acts in the same grand drama, following in quick succession. First, the dead saints will be raised : then they and the living "together with them" (*ἅμα σὺν αὐτοῖς*), enveloped in clouds, will be caught up into the air, to meet the Lord as he descends from heaven with the shout of command (*κελεύσμα*), with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. How close the correspondence with 1 Cor. 15 : 52 : "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, the dead will be raised and we [the living] shall be changed,"—both these acts preparatory to the being caught up together into the air to meet the descending Lord, and join his gathering hosts.

Describing the same illustrious event as witnessed from the earthly standpoint, after having foretold the afflictions and calamities which will immediately precede it, the Saviour said to his disciples in that memorable prophetic discourse just before his crucifixion : "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with

great power and glory. And then will he send forth his angels, and gather together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of earth to the uttermost part of heaven." (Mark 13 : 26, 27.) The gathering of the elect is the prominent thought here. Luke adds in this same connection, "And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads ; for your redemption draweth nigh." (Luke 21 : 28.) These words of encouragement can be addressed to disciples only ; and so also the words of exhortation in ver. 34 : "Take heed to yourselves lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day come upon you un-awares,"—implying that there will be false and dissolute and worldly disciples among the professors, and probably among the expectants of the time. The un-righteous have no part in the resurrection upon which these signs and calamities will be attendant. It should be remarked here that by "this generation," in connection with these passages, is no doubt meant the generation in which the signs described will appear. Having fixed the thoughts of his auditory on the predicted period by his sublime description, he quite naturally adds, "this generation shall not pass till all these things come to pass."

The same event is correspondingly prefigured in the parables of the Ten Virgins and of the Talents. (Matt. 25 : 1-30.) Under the character of "virgins" and "servants" are represented not all mankind, but professed disciples, as regards their true relation to Christ and their preparation to meet him at his coming. The foolish virgins are shut out from the wedding ; the un-

profitable servant is condemned to outer darkness. But the doom of neither is consummated. They have, thenceforth, "their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers," being excluded from the first resurrection (Matt. 24 : 51 ; Luke 12 : 46) and await the awards of the final judgment. Neither in this representation are the openly ungodly included. (See Trench on Parables, and Alford and Lange *in his locis*.)

The same remarks apply, so far as relates to the point now under consideration, to the parable of the Pounds. (Luke 19 : 12-27.) In one respect, however, this parable takes a wider range, and foreshows the execution of temporal judgments upon open enemies of Christ, when he comes to reign. The nobleman having received the kingdom and returned, and reckoned with and rewarded his faithful servants, gave command to "slay those his enemies who would not that he should reign over them." How remarkably does this correspond with Paul's prophetic announcement of the fate of "the man of sin" and his impious and deluded adherents, "whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and will destroy with the brightness of his coming," and also with that other prediction of his, "the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. For when they shall say Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them." (2 Thess. 2 : 3 seq.; 1 Thess. 5 : 2, 3.) These passages announce the summary execution of temporal judgments upon earthly enemies of Christ and partisans of Antichrist at the beginning of the millennial reign.

In all these portions of Scripture, prominence is given to the suddenness of the appearance and the summons.

It will be as the lightning-flash ; but we can know neither the day nor the hour. Living disciples of every age are therefore warned to watch and be always ready. (So Matt. 24 : 27, 37-44 ; Mark 13 : 32-37 ; Luke 12 : 35-48 ; 17 : 22 seq. ; 1 Thess. 5 : 2-10 ; et al.)

Other passages, though less full and direct, are not less explicit on this subject. As for example, at the time of the Lord's ascension two bright messengers were sent from the court of heaven to comfort and encourage the disciples in their sense of bereavement, and sustain their faith and hope with the assurance of his personal return : " This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye saw him going into heaven." (Acts 1 : 11.) How particular the description of his return ! " So, in like manner," will he come, descending in heavenly clouds as they had seen him ascend. Having been instructed by their Master, they knew all that was implied in this promised return, including the first resurrection and all " the grace that is to be brought to the saints at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1 : 13.) And therefore this message was enough for them. Peter presented the same as a sufficient incentive to his countrymen to repent and accept the Messiah whom, in the person of Jesus, they had rejected, and so hasten the preparation for his predicted reign of glory and blessedness : " Repent therefore, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord ; and that he may send Jesus Christ, who was before appointed for you ; whom it is necessary that heaven should receive until the times of the restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of his holy

prophets from the beginning." (Acts 3 : 19-21.) "The times of restoration" referred to (ver. 21) will begin with the Second Coming, and will advance to the realization of "a state of primeval order, purity, and happiness, such as will exist for those who have part in the kingdom of Christ at his coming." (Hackett *in loco*. See also the following : Luke 14 : 14 ; John 14 : 3 ; 1 Cor. 1 : 7, 8 ; 11 : 26.) The Lord's Supper is a stated reminder of him "*till he come*," and therefore a standing pledge and prophecy of his coming and reign on the earth. (Phil. 3 : 11 ; 1 Thess. 1 : 10 ; 3 : 13 ; 2 Thess. 3 : 5 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 14, 15 ; Titus 2 : 13 ; Heb. 9 : 28 ; James 5 : 7 ; 1 Peter 1 : 7 ; 4 : 13 ; 2 Peter 1 : 16 seq. ; 1 John 2 : 28 ; Rev. 16 : 15.) These among the many.

But what will become of those living who are not Christ's at his coming—the unregenerate, unbelieving part of mankind of that period ? and how will they be affected by the stupendous fulfilments of that grand epoch ? Will they be mere spectators, indifferent or curious, but not personally concerned ? To meet such inquiries it is important to consider in this connection in the light of prophecy what will be the religious and moral state of the world in the times immediately preceding "the day of the Lord."

#### THE GREAT APOSTASY AND THE COMING OF ANTI-CHRIST.

The Scriptures speak of a great apostasy, advancing to prevailing bold infidelity and enormous general corruption and wickedness, in the latter days. In the comprehensive brevity of our Lord's own utterance, "lawless-

ness shall abound, and the love of the many will become cold." (Matt. 24 : 12.) Paul says, "The Spirit saith expressly that, in latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons ; of those who speak lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared," etc. (1 Tim. 4 : 1-3.) And again : "This know, that in last days grievous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, implacable, slanderers (*διαβόλοι*), incontinent, fierce, without love of the good, traitors, heady, infatuated, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power." (2 Tim. 3 : 1-5.) A picture made up of the darkest traits of depravity ! Read also 2 Tim. 4 : 3, 4 ; 2 Peter 3 : 3, 4 ; Jude 17-19) ; and the whole of the second chapter of 2 Peter.

These Scriptures only allude to what the disciples addressed understood well already from the oral instructions of the apostles. But there is enough in these allusions to make a state of the world, in all that pertains to human character and relations, that is truly appalling. There will be (1) a general apostasy from the faith of Christ, a giving heed to doctrines of demons impersonated in false teachers, who will deliberately or recklessly pervert the truth and "teach lies in hypocrisy," who "will artfully bring in ruinous heresies," denying and teaching others to deny the Lord who bought them, "by reason of whom the way of truth will be evil spoken of," and falsehood and error will predominate. We are forcibly reminded of the Saviour's query : "When the Son



of man cometh, will he find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18 : 8.) There will be (2), attendant upon and consequent upon this defection from the faith and doctrines of the Gospel, a prevailing utter disregard for religion in all its claims and of every faith and form, a contempt of God and of every thing held sacred, universal corruption of morals and trampling upon moral obligations, open violation of the principles of right and justice, infidelity made practical in every form of blasphemy, violence, outrage, and crime, without any of the restraints of religion, order, or law. A fearful state to contemplate !

It is expressly said that this apostasy will take place "in the latter days." But apostasy is not a sudden occurrence, confined to a definite point of time. It is a progressive work requiring a period of time for its accomplishment. It advances step by step as it is able to lead and control public sentiment. Dr. Hodge gives liberal scope for this apostasy by making "these passages refer to a marked characteristic of *the period between the apostolic age and the second coming of Christ*," and, farther on, by making "'the last time' extend *from the first to the second advent of Christ*" (vol. iii. pp. 812, 823); a space which he fills with "many antichrists," besides the whole succession of the papacy!! But he assents also to the opinion of those who date the beginning of the apostasy at the fall of the Roman Empire. Unfortunately for this theory, there was no particular change or tendency of sentiment or manners, to mark the beginning of a revolution in faith or morals, at that time; and the papacy did not originate till long after, nor in any apparent connection, historical, political, social, or logical, with the fall of Rome,

We are evidently pointed forward, for the beginning of this predicted apostasy, to a time far down in the future when the predictions were made, after the wide and general dissemination of the doctrines of Christianity. So great a "falling away," so general as the predictions indicate, presupposes the widest diffusion of the light and truth of the Gospel. And, moreover, since the depths of vileness and depravity to which men sink are always proportioned to the heights of intelligence and privilege from which they begin their descent, such a state of extreme wickedness as these Scriptures depict could be consequent upon nothing less than the universal proclamation and wilful rejection of gospel grace and truth. And this corresponds with the words of Jesus, who, when forewarning his disciples of the latter-day persecutions, when they "will be hated of all for his name's sake," said: "It is necessary that the Gospel be published first to all the nations." (Mark 13: 10.) It is evident, therefore, from these Scriptures, text and context, that the expressions "latter times, last days," etc., designate the closing period of the present *aeon*, or age of the world, immediately preceding the second appearing of Christ. It will be the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος*, the *ending*, or closing up of the age, which must be distinguished from the simple *τέλος*, the *end*. The former denotes an *interval* of time which will be characterized by the great apostasy and the attendant afflictions and commotions; the latter denotes a *point* of time which will be marked by the sudden coming of the Son of man. Compare the use of the former in Matt. 24: 3, which relates to the period of signs foretokening the final event, with the use of the latter in vers. 6, 13, 14, which relates to the final event itself.

This state of abounding iniquity will prepare the way for the coming of Antichrist, the revelation of the man of sin, who will put himself at the head and gather up under his control, and as it were condense in himself and impersonate, all these forces of evil. Only John calls this prophetic personage by the significant name of "the Antichrist," doubtless with reference to his true character as the opposer and adversary of Christ; though, apparently, to effect his designs he will set up pretensions, by "signs and wonders of falsehood," to be the very Christ of the predicted *parousia*. But Paul describes and characterizes him in connection with the apostasy which will culminate in his appearing: "The day of the Lord will not come unless there come first the falling away, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above every one called God or an object of worship, so that he sits in the temple of God showing himself that he is God." Please read the whole passage, 2 Thess. 2 : 3-13.

Now, it will not do to allegorize this vivid description, as some have, and make the subject of it a mere principle of wickedness. By the same kind of allegorical sorcery the devil has been reduced to a malignant principle of evil in man's nature. Neither can it, without violent distortion of language, be applied to a state or polity, nor with any degree of consistency to any order or succession of men. The application of it to the popes in succession as a *pontifex universalis*, though the idea originated in the twelfth century, found its first active support in the partisan spirit of the Reformation; and the Papists retorted in the same spirit, applying it to the Protestant leaders. There is no reason to expect that

future developments will ever decide the matter in favor of either party. Evidently this Scripture, and 1 John 2 : 18 ; 4 : 3, foretell a real living personality, an individual man, who has not yet come, but who will make his appearance at the close of the predicted period of apostasy ; as Ellicott fitly remarks, " The agent and emissary of Satan, no mere set of principles, or succession of opponents, but one single personal being, as truly man as he whom he impiously opposes." (*In loco.*) It seems significant that the same word, *παρουσία* (*parousia*), which is used for the second appearing of the Son of man is used also for the appearing of the Man of sin ; thus, as well as by contrariety of title, representing the true character and antagonism of Antichrist.

But it is made an objection to this view that John speaks of " many antichrists," even in his own time. So is the word *διάβολος*, *devil*, applied to devilish human characters, to Judas Iscariot, and in the plural to " slanderers and false accusers, male and female." (John 6 : 70 ; 1 Tim. 3 : 11 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 3 ; Titus 2 : 3.) Shall we infer that there is no personal devil ? Rather, in the one case as well as the other, the force and fitness of the term is derived from the notorious personality to which it belongs as a proper appellative. Even then there were many who were actuated by the spirit of the coming Antichrist, whose malignant antagonism to gospel truth foreshadowed the apostasy and persecution of " the last time."

See also Dan. 7 : 25-27 ; Rev. 13 : 11-18, in which the same impious individual, Antichrist, the man of sin, may be distinctly identified.

But his ascendancy will be of short duration, only " until a time and times and the dividing of a time,"

generally understood, from comparison of prophetic statements of time, to mean three years and a half—a brief period, no doubt. In the height of his satanic power and false pretensions and God-defying arrogance, and when his adherents “shall say, Peace and safety, sudden destruction shall come.” (1 Thess. 5 : 3.) The Lord Jesus will appear, “coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” and “will consume him with the breath of his mouth, and will destroy him with the brightness of his coming.” This will be *the end*, τὸ τέλος, the closing event of the present *aeon*. Then will begin “the times of restoration,” “and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.” (Dan. 7 : 27 ; Rev. 20 : 4.)

See on this subject the article Antichrist, in Smith’s Dictionary of the Bible ; also Lange’s Com. on 2 Thess. 2 : 3-12.

#### ATTENDANT JUDGMENTS UPON THE UNGODLY.

We return now to the inquiry, What will befall those who are not Christ’s at his coming ? How will the unbelieving apostate world be affected by the tremendous events of the latter days ? They will not be indifferent nor secure. Involved in the guilt and wickedness of the apostasy, they will be involved also in the consequent judgments of the times. In that eventful closing period God will employ supernatural means to vindicate his truth and protect and avenge his elect, and execute judgments upon the ungodly persecuting world of mankind ; for “those will be days of vengeance.” From the manifest identity of the closing times and seasons

referred to in the different prophecies on this subject, it is clear that in connection with the final apostasy and the career of Antichrist will occur the direful afflictions and commotions foretold by our Lord in the 24th chapter of Matthew and 21st of Luke. The woes and calamities attendant upon the destruction of Jerusalem were a prophetic miniature of greater woes and more terrible calamities at the closing up of the age ; and most of these predictions have not had even a typical fulfilment, but refer exclusively to the last times. There will be political convulsions and upheavings, " wars and rumors of wars. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." There will be personal unnatural alienations, and a common sundering of sacred bonds : " They will betray one another, and hate one another. The brother will deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child ; and children will rise up against parents, and cause them to be put to death." The disciples of Christ who remain faithful amid the general corruption will be hated and persecuted. " Then they will deliver you up unto affliction, and will kill you ; and ye will be hated of all nations for my name's sake." As the end draws near, fearful portents in the material heavens, the sun, the moon, the stars, and in the air, the earth, the sea, will follow, and terrify the wicked : " The sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven ; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn (*κόψονται*, give expressive tokens of lamentation and dismay) ; and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven

with power and great glory." Or, in the vivid words of Luke's record : " There shall be signs in the sun, and moon, and stars, and on the earth distress of nations in perplexity for the roaring of sea and waves ; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking for those things which are coming upon the world ; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Matthew adds : " And he will send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather up his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Read again 1 Thess. 4 : 14 seq., and note the harmony with these predictions of our Lord.

The shout of command (*κελεύσμα*) from " the Lord himself " to his mustering hosts, the voice of the archangel, and the great sound of the trumpet of God reverberating o'er land and sea in tones to wake the dead as the angels go abroad to gather the elect from among all nations, tribes, and families, will spread consternation and dismay through all ranks of the ungodly. And while those " ministering spirits " speed their way, and execute their commission on behalf of " the heirs of salvation," the ties and relations of earth will be severed ; kindred, friends, companions, partners in labor and in mere worldly interests, pursuits, and pleasures, will be instantly separated, " one taken, the other left." While the cloud of heavenly splendor, with the bright angelic host attendant upon the Son of man, will be seen moving in mid-ether, and approaching with awful sublimity, unbelievers and scoffers accustomed to ridicule the Christian's hope and sneer at the anticipation of a Second Coming, and careless worldlings living at ease or

absorbed in gain or pleasure, will see their pious associates caught away and borne on angels' wings "into the air to meet the Lord, and be forever with him," while they will themselves "be left" exposed to the calamities and subject to the tribulations of the time, without shelter, or protection, or hope of deliverance. It will be the grand consummation of a series of convulsions and revolutions, of upheavings and overturnings, attendant upon the transition from this to the succeeding *aeon* of the divine administration, upon the ending of the present and the beginning of a new order in our world. In the words of Meyer: "What total change in the state of things, what rending and revolution of all the relations of life, what decisive catastrophes, will declare themselves to be at hand, in the judgment and changing of the *αιῶνες*!" And such events will not only "declare themselves to be at hand" by fearful omens, but will actually "come upon the ungodly world."

There is a striking correspondence, which cannot fail to impress any one who carefully studies and compares between the train of events foretold by our Lord in the 24th and 25th chapters of Matthew as supplemented by the other evangelists, and the revelations made to John in Patmos—especially when these predictions are distinguished, as they very naturally arrange themselves, into characteristic cycles. The scenic representations of the Apocalypse connected with the opening of the seals, the sounding of the trumpets, and the pouring out of the cups of wrath, are only an expansion with more minuteness of detail of the Saviour's predictions. The apocalyptic woes attendant upon the sounding of the trumpets will follow each other in rapid succession as "the end"



of the age draws near, and none of them will long precede the coming of the Son of man. Jesus said, "When ye see these things" [the afflictions and commotions which he had just foretold, and which are evidently identical with the woes of the trumpets, especially the fifth and sixth]—"When ye see these things coming to pass, know that the kingdom of God is near." (Luke 21 : 31 ; Mark 13 : 29 ; Matt. 24 : 33.)

Thus does the prophetic Word forewarn us of things to come in the latter times. The destiny of our race on the earth is foreshown, not only in its developed stages, but in its progressive development as purpose after purpose of God is unfolding. And this finds special illustration in the subordinate premonitory and concurrent events connected with the coming and kingdom of Christ. That glorious *parousia* will be the grand, final event of the closing *aeon* ; and it will usher in the millennial reign. But it will be preceded and attended by terrible woes and calamities in the judgment and destruction of Antichrist and his adherents. Political and social revolutions and subversions of order, attended by fierce struggles and conflicts, and "distress of nations," and the reign of malignant passions, will be followed by cosmical throes and convulsions, affecting fearfully the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth especially in its lands and seas and elements.

By these woes and calamities very many, probably a large part, of those dwelling on the earth in the thoughtless or defiant security of unbelief will perish, and the world will seem to be threatened with utter desolation and destruction. The adherents of anti-Christianity, and of pseudo-Christianity in all its corrupt forms, will have

their lot in these calamities, among the votaries of other false systems, though subject to deeper condemnation and severer judgment. (Matt. 11 : 20 ; Jude 4 seq. ; 2 Peter 3 : 3 ; 2 Tim. 3 : 1 seq.) They will not be distinguished from the openly infidel and ungodly. They will have "their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers." (Matt. 24 : 51 ; Luke 12 : 46.) Such Scriptures as the following will then have their fulfilment : Isa. 13 : 6 seq. This cannot be limited to the destruction of Babylon ; it is yet unfulfilled. (Isa. 24 : 1 seq. ; Jer. 30 : 23, 24 ; 1 Thess. 5 : 3 ; Rev. 6 : 12 seq. ; 9 : 1 seq.) Please turn to these portions of God's Word. They are too long to insert here. It is plain that there will be discrimination in the judgments which will fall upon the ungodly ; but none but those who are Christ's will find a place of security at his coming. And only "for the elect's sake shall those days be shortened."

But it does not appear that the earth will be destroyed, nor that men will be destroyed from off the earth at that time. For we learn from the prophetic account of "these things, and the things which shall be after these" (Rev. 1 : 19 ; 4 : 1), that some survive in every catastrophe, and that there will be men dwelling on the earth, and even nations with kings and organized governments, not identified with the kingdom of Christ, down to the close of his millennial reign. (Rev. 6 : 15 ; 9 : 20 ; 11 : 13 ; 16 : 9, 11, 14 ; and 11 : 18 ; 19 : 19.) At the close of "the thousand years," when "Satan will be loosed out of his prison, he will go out to mislead the nations that are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to the war, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." And these hosts

will encamp against the saints. (Rev. 20 : 7 seq.) And the special object of Christ's reign is to "do away with all other rule and authority and power, and put all enemies under his feet," and thus consummate his kingdom and perfect his government over this revolted province of his empire, and complete the redemption of our fallen world. When this is accomplished, "he delivers up the kingdom." Of course it is an earthly kingdom, though in its origin and principles "not of this world" (his heavenly reign will never end); and therefore the powers to be subjugated and the enemies to be subdued are of this world, or those whose fortunes and hopes are linked with the affairs of this world.

Moral fitness requires that this world, which has been specially the scene of Satan's usurped dominion, should be made the scene of his overthrow; that here the victory should be achieved and the Conqueror celebrate his triumph, exhibiting the restoration in the sphere of the ruin. Thus, too, the moral effect upon all the races of God's intelligent creatures, spectators of the events of redemption, would be heightened. And with this antecedent fitness the inspired Word is in complete harmony. Paul associates it with the divine purpose in the mystery of redemption: "To the intent that now to the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3 : 10, 11.)

#### THE BEGINNING OF A NEW ORDER.

The coming again of Christ will introduce a new order of things. It will be the beginning of a new organiza-

tion of human society and renewed physical conditions of the earth. Every thing will tend to renovation and restoration, for "the times of the restoration of all things" (Acts 3 : 21) will have arrived. It will initiate a new era of the divine administration in this world. Thenceforth the only legitimate government will be strictly theocratic. None but Emmanuel, God-with-us, in the person of Christ, will have right to reign, and to him eventually "all rule, and authority, and power" will be subjected, and he will reign without a rival or a foe.

But the new order will not be perfected immediately, nor without the employment of means and instrumentalities. The prophecies relating to the millennial reign make it quite clear that it will be a period of progress, advancing step by step, by successive fulfilments, till "the kingdom of the world becomes our Lord's and his Christ's." The revelations of that period are delineations of progress, conquest, subduing of enemies, enlargement, extension of borders. It does not appear that the saints will immediately occupy the whole earth, nor that Christ, "whose right it is," will at once extend his sovereignty and assert his authority over all the tribes and nations of men. The complete accomplishment of this divine purpose occupies the whole period of his earthly reign. See 1 Cor. 15 : 24 seq.; Ps. 2 : 6 seq.; 45 : 3 seq.; 110, whole Psalm; and the passages hereafter cited.

But where, and by what means, and through whose agency and instrumentality, will the new order be introduced, the Messianic kingdom be inaugurated? Just at this point God's ancient chosen people assume an essential relation to our subject. A peculiar part is as-

signed them at this period, for which all the discipline of their previous history has by divine direction been preparing them.

#### THE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

The restoration of the Jews to the land of their fathers, and their conversion to Christ, the one event following closely upon the other, will be immediately preparatory and introductory to the millennial reign. But these events will necessarily precede the *destruction* of Antichrist, since that will be coincident with our Lord's coming. The restoration will, from the nature of the case almost beyond doubt, and most probably the conversion, precede the "*revelation* of the man of sin." Some suppose that Antichrist will be a Jew, that in connection with, or soon after, the return of his nation he will take advantage of the Jewish expectation of a coming Messiah, and by means of crafty political devices, aided by Satanic miracles to confirm his pretensions, will deceive the people, insinuate himself into power, and literally "sit in the temple of God" rebuilt at Jerusalem, "showing himself that he is God." This may be regarded as theoretical; but it seems to be entirely reconcilable with all that is revealed on this subject.

On the ultimate conversion of the Jews to Christ there is general agreement among writers and expositors; but their restoration to their own land has been made a question. It is not proposed to go into a full discussion of this question here, but only to consider it so far as necessary to the present subject, and hand it over, by quotations and references, to Scripture authority. Cer-

tain it is that the simple and explicit language of prophecy leaves no more room for a question on the restoration than on the conversion of the Jews, nor on either of these than on their dispersion. Before the captivity, and the subsequent general dispersion of Israel, there was as good ground for a question on those facts as there is now on their restoration. In passages too numerous to quote, indeed in most passages which relate to the subject, the dispersion and the restoration are coupled together in similar forms of prediction. If the one must be taken figuratively, so must the other. If the one is literal, so is the other. The historic fact of the dispersion therefore confirms the prophetic fact of the restoration.

The prophecies on this subject are, many of them, of a general nature. They are connected with promises and threatenings conditioned on obedience or disobedience ; and they apply to the Jewish people through all their history. They were not exhaustively fulfilled in the Babylonian captivity and return, nor in any completed train of events which has yet befallen the chosen nation. They apply to the present and future of Israel as well as the past, and will not be fulfilled till that distinguished people are restored to the land of their former inheritance, and take their place in Messiah's kingdom. It was not unforeseen that they would be disobedient and bring upon themselves the curses threatened ; yet their repentance and reconciliation were always contemplated and provided for. As, for example, in the 26th chapter of Leviticus, after having threatened to " scatter them among the nations," and bring other fearful judgments upon them, God says by Moses : " And yet for all that, when they are in the

land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them : for I am Jehovah their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God : I am Jehovah."

Has he, after all, broken his covenant, and cast them away? Let Paul answer: "God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew,"—foreknew in all their vileness. They have not been forgotten in his counsel or his care. They have been miraculously preserved as a distinct and peculiar people though scattered abroad, while other ancient nationalities have melted away in their native lands. God will gather them again from among all the nations whither he has scattered them. And when gathered they will be accessible, as a nation, to the means of evangelization as they are not, and cannot be, in their dispersion. And then their conversion will soon follow.

"Blindness in part has happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11 : 25.) "But they have not stumbled that they should fall." In the fulness of the time, the judicial hardness which has come upon their understandings will cease. The veil which is upon their heart in the reading of the Old Testament will be taken away. They will correctly understand, and be properly affected by, the predictions of their ancient prophets : and they will turn to the Lord. (2 Cor. 3 : 14-16.) With bitter repentance and solemn national lamentation, confession, and supplication, they will accept the Messiah, whom in his humiliation they

rejected and crucified. "It shall come to pass, in that day, says Jehovah, that I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem." Thus it appears that, at the time foretold, the chosen nation will be gathered in and around their ancient capital, and be the object of hostility to other nations, against whom God will defend them and destroy their enemies. Then it is added, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his first-born. In that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land [the whole land of Israel's ancient possession] shall mourn, every family apart," etc.—A general lamentation, repentance, and acceptance of Jesus as the Christ, through all the recovered land, by all the families of the restored people. (Zech. 12 : 9 seq.)

This indicates clearly the order of fulfilment. The Jews will first be restored to their country—very probably from political or mercenary motives; and then, the way being thus prepared for efficient evangelical labor among them, they will soon be converted to Christ. And such is the general tenor of prophecy on this subject. It is more than probable that the afflictions and tribulations of the closing *aeon* will contribute much to effect this change of mind and heart in the people of Israel, thus fulfilling the Lord's prediction by preparing them to welcome his coming, and "say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." But whatever natural causes



may operate, doubtless God's power will be seen in supernatural manifestations in bringing these things to pass.

When Israel shall thus "repent and be converted, the times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord; and he will send forth Jesus Christ, who was before appointed for them." (Acts 3 : 19, 20.) And his return, and the gathering of his saints, will be the beginning of the predicted period of renovation (*παλιγγενεσία*, *re-gensis*, Matt. 19 : 28), the incipient act in the new series of manifestations of that *ἐνέργεια*, *energy*, by which he will subject all things to himself. (Phil. 3 : 21.) God's ancient people are destined to act a conspicuous part in the introduction of the new order, when Christ who was "once offered to bear the sins of many shall to those who look for him appear a second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9 : 28.) Their conversion and solemn acceptance of Jesus as the Messiah will fix the gaze of the nations, and be associated with the wonders of the times. It will remove the great hindrance to the "times of refreshing and restoration" foretold by all the holy prophets; for so Peter, in the passage already quoted, represents the impenitency of his countrymen. Paul says, "If their fall is the riches of the world, and their diminution the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness!" And, "If the casting away of them is the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead!" (Rom. 11 : 12, 15.) Literally, *life from the dead*: it will be ultimately associated with the first resurrection. In the opening *aeon* God's ancient people will again appear in front of the march.

On this point the recoil of Dr. Hodge and others at

the idea of a Jewish "peerage in the church of the future," and of being "servant to a Jew merely because he is a Jew" (*Syst. Theol.*, vol. iii. p. 811) savors of a spirit which is indeed very natural to the human breast in our present associations, but which, it is to be confidently expected, will not remain to disturb the relations of the millennial saints. The doctor modifies the objection, however, by adding, "unless indeed such should prove to be the will of Christ; then such service would be an honor." But no such peerage or service is implied in any honors or distinctions which it may please God to confer upon nations or individuals in that harmonious order. When God's children of every race and family are sanctified wholly, there will be no more place for discordant ambition and rivalry in any bosom. In those pure and holy relations, every one will rejoice in the lot of all.

To cite all the passages which foretell the reassembling of the Jews in the land of their fathers would be to cite a large portion of the prophetic Scriptures. As Auberlen remarks: "The doctrine of the future glorious restoration of Israel is such an essential and fundamental idea of all prophecy, that the difficulty is not so much to find passages in which it is taught, as to select from the great number." See as examples: Lev. 26 : 42 seq.; Deut. 30 : 3 seq.; Isa. 10 : 20-26; 11 : 11 seq.; 32 : 15; 65 : 8-10; Jer. 16 : 14, 15; 23 : 3-8; 46 : 27, 28; 50 : 4-7; Ez. 11 : 14-20; 20 : 33-44; 34 : 11 seq.; 39 : 2 seq.; 43 : 7-12; Amos 9 : 8 seq.; Micah 2 : 12; 4 : 6-8; Zeph. 3 : 10 seq.; Zech. 2 : 4, 10-12; 8 : 8-15; 9 : 9 seq.; 12 : 5 seq.; Rom. ch. 11; 2 Cor. 3 : 16. The last three chapters of Zechariah are particularly remarkable for explicit circumstantial statements. They may be re-

garded as a compend of all preceding prophecy on the subject. It requires a good degree of proficiency in modern methods of allegorical interpretation to spiritualize away the plain common sense of such Scriptures as these, and reconcile them with the prevailing mystical orthodoxy.

#### RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF JERUSALEM.

In all the numerous prophecies on this subject the re-establishment of Jerusalem in power and importance is always implied, and often directly affirmed. That it will be the earthly seat and centre of the Messianic government, is distinctly announced in such passages as the following : " Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities : thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down ; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken. But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers," etc. (Isa. 33 : 20 seq.) " At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord : and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. Neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart." Jer. 3 : 17. See context. " Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion : for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord. And many nations shall be joined to the Lord in that day [alluding to the progress of his kingdom], and shall be my people ; and I will dwell in the midst of thee ; and thou shalt know that the Lord hath sent me unto thee. And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again." Zech. 2 : 10 seq. See also 1 Kings 11 : 13 ; 2 Chron. 6 : 6 ; Isa. 31 : 5 ;

51 : 17 ; 52 : 9 ; 62 : 1 seq. ; Joel 3 : 1, 20 ; Zech. 1 : 17 ; 8 : 8 ; 12 : 6 ; 14 : 17 ; Mal. 3 : 4 ; Ez. ch. 40 to 48 ; Luke 21 : 24.

But it is objected that this argument from the ancient prophecies would prove too much ; that it involves the rebuilding of the temple, the reinstatement of the priesthood, the sacrifices, and the whole Mosaic ritual. This by no means follows. The inference is superficial and illegitimate. It overlooks the fact that terms and modes of description which have had their origin and development in the present order of things can apply but imperfectly to the new order. " For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious." (2 Cor. 3 : 11.) When this is taken into consideration, as it must be, there is nothing in any of these prophetic allusions or descriptions which might not be fulfilled in the externals of a highly spiritual worship, such as will prevail in the millennial times. The expressions are probably as literal as is possible in present forms of speech and addressed to our present conceptions, yet applicable to a more exalted worship, as to place and forms and appointments, than we have any just idea of. This is very different from mere symbolic abstraction. The temple may be rebuilt, its services renewed, really and literally, yet in adaptation to the new order.

To reduce the plain simple language of such prophecies as those cited above to mere imagery and symbolism, tends to produce the impression that the Holy Scriptures are utterly unintelligible, and to destroy confidence in their positive declarations. Let us accept them as meaning what they so distinctly say. Jerusalem will " be chosen again," and made " a praise in all the earth." (Isa. 62 : 7.)

It will be restored, enlarged, embellished, on a scale of magnificence suitable to the chief city of the millennial kingdom. (Ez. ch. 40, *ad fin.*) It will become the metropolis of the world, the source and centre of all legitimate earthly authority, the royal city of King Emmanuel. There he who is "the root and the offspring of David" will fix his throne as "Prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1 : 5); and thus the promises and prophecies of the perpetuity of David's throne and kingdom will be fulfilled. (2 Sam. 7 : 16 ; Isa. 9 : 7.) There he will begin his reign : while in and far around "the holy city," over a region sufficiently extended, including Israel's ancient promised possession, amid the charms and delights of a renewed Eden-state, the risen saints associated in his administration will have their happy abodes.

In them the inspired ideal of "a royal priesthood" will then be fully realized ; and in the execution of their legitimate office as "priests of God and of Christ reigning with him on the earth" (Rev. 20 : 6 ; 5 : 10), they will go forth on errands of judgment and mercy, to execute his commands and extend his authority. They will bear with them every where the message of peace and amnesty from their king, and invite men to reconciliation and submission, still on the terms of the Gospel. For the dispensation of Gospel grace will not be closed during the millennial reign : it will only be an advanced stage of it. Salvation will be offered to the unreconciled and unregenerate on the same terms as formerly, not perhaps with any new means of grace, but with increased wisdom and intensified power in the use and application of them. And as the earthly presence of Christ and the government administered by him and his risen

saints, on principles of unerring righteousness and heavenly benignity, will be standing miracles in the view of all mankind, and doubtless be attended with special miracles, and as Satan will be imprisoned "that he mislead the nations no more till the thousand years are finished" (Rev. 20 : 23), the Gospel will speed its predicted triumph. None but the incorrigibly hardened and sealed for perdition will hold out in unbelief or resistance ; and of such the number will become smaller and smaller as the millennial years advance. The glowing prophetic visions of the Messiah's kingdom, and his victorious church, will begin to be realized, "beginning," as formerly, "at Jerusalem." "For the Lord shall comfort Zion ; he will comfort all her waste places ; he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord ; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. Harken unto me, my people, and give ear unto me, O my nation : for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people. My righteousness is near ; my salvation is gone forth (see Matt. 24 : 14), and mine arms shall judge the people : the isles shall wait upon me, and on my arm shall they trust." (Isa. 51 : 3, 4, 5.) "Awake, awake ; put on thy strength, O Zion ; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city : for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean." Isa. 52 : 1 seq. Read the whole chapter. "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations : spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes : for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left ; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles

and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." (Isa. 54 : 1-3.)

#### PROGRESS OF THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

From these beginnings the divine purposes in the redemption of our race and the renovation of our world will be rapidly unfolded till "the kingdom, and the dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High" (Dan. 7 : 27), and "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2 : 14.) Yet there will remain, still lurking in some unregenerate bosoms, held solely by righteous authority in unwilling submission, the spirit of rebellion which Satan, on his release from prison, will easily arouse into the final insurrection of Gog and Magog.

It is not improbable that the new order will proceed somewhat after God's original plan when he placed man in Eden "to replenish the earth and subdue it." Eden was but a small tract on the surface of our globe, and even in that only the garden which "Jehovah God planted" was at first fitted to be the happy abode of man. Had the first pair not sinned, but in due time, before age had impaired their bodies, eaten of the fruit of the tree of life, and become immortal, Paradise, we reasonably and scripturally conclude, would have been enlarged as the race increased and its well-being, happiness, and advancement, demanded, till it took in the whole surface of the earth. Similar to this ("beginning at Jerusalem" and Palestine) may be the progress of the renovation of the earth, and its occupancy by the re-

embodied saints under the millennial administration. District after district, province after province, will be reclaimed from the baleful effects of sin, and fitted and furnished and ornamented for their delightful residence or occasional sojourn, while serving in the administration of the expanding kingdom. But as they go forth on their missions of peace and love, bearing messages of reconciliation, they will be received everywhere with joyous welcome, by willing and affectionate people, who will be glad of their presence and their message. The selected seat of sovereignty, "the city of the Great King," "the mountain of the Lord's house established in the top of the mountains," will be from the first a religiously romantic centre of attraction; and there will be a "flowing of all nations unto it." (Isa. 2 : 2 seq.; Mic. 4 : 1.) What Isaiah foresaw in the rapt vision of inspiration will be realized with increasing fulness as the millennial age rolls on: "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." (Isa. 2 : 3, 4.) "When the enemy [Antichrist. See previous context.] shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. [Then the new covenant,



which is more fully expressed in Jer. 31 : 31 seq. ; Heb. 8 : 8 seq. ; and the prophet, enraptured at the view, adds :] Arise, shine ; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people : but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. [The first beams of the light of the millennial day will be seen on Mount Zion, at Jerusalem, whither "the Redeemer will suddenly come." ] And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about and see : all they gather themselves together, they come to thee : thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged ; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee." (Isa. 59 : 19 seq.) Read the whole 60th chapter and the 31st of Jeremiah in this connection.

To treat plain, definite utterances, such as we find on this subject in these and numerous other portions of the prophetic Scriptures, as mere symbolic or ecstatic imagery employed to clothe spiritual abstractions, and confine their fulfilment to present missionary labors and enterprises and the ordinary dissemination of Christianity in premillennial times, is simply to mystify the language of inspiration, and envelop every sacred declaration in doubt and perplexity. The Jewish interpretation of the Messianic prophecies led them to reject Christ when he appeared in his humiliation : this modern theory of interpretation, so widely popular in Christendom, must, if followed to its legitimate result, lead to the re-

jection of him when he comes in his glory. The one theory ignores his first coming, the other his second. The practical result of the one has been seen in the obstinate blindness which has happened to Israel : that of the other will yet be seen in the complete development and organization of all the forces of infidelity in the person and sway of Antichrist.

There is no Scripture which justifies the expectation of the complete prevalence of the Gospel, nor of the universal reign of peace on the earth, before the Second Coming of the Lord. The true object of missionary effort is to cause "the Gospel of the kingdom to be preached in all the world, for a testimony to all the nations" (Matt. 24 : 14), that is, to herald the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of Messiah and of the salvation which is provided in it ; to publish the conditions upon which salvation is offered, and urge men everywhere to accept it, as the only means of escape from impending eternal ruin. But not all will accept it. Many will reject or neglect it, as they do now in nominally Christian lands. And this will be the case down to the close of the premillennial age. Doubtless some "nations," as nations, will reject it, and cling to their idolatry, and so seal their doom ; for, with special reference to the issues of the last times, the prophet says, "The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish ; yea, those nations shall be utterly destroyed." (Isa. 60 : 12.) But the "testimony" of the Gospel will not be lost nor fail of its design, though many reject it. It will be turned against the rejectors. It will justify the judgments of the closing period, and show that "the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all

should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3 : 9.) It will take from those who are incorrigible every plea and excuse. And thus the way will be prepared for the coming of the Son of man. "And then [when this preparatory work is done] shall the end come,"—that is, the end of the world-period, signalized by the *parousia*.

But it is said this takes away the chief incentive to missionary labor. How so, when we know that this preparatory work is indispensable, in the plan of grace, to all that is to follow? that from it proceeds every step of future progress, and on it depends the final result? In no subsequent stage of evangelization till the world is subdued to Christ is labor more essential to the grand final triumph than in these beginnings. This "*must first*" be done, or nothing will ever be done. (Mark 13 : 10.) In prosecuting this work, the disciples of Christ ought to feel that the salvation of all who are to be saved is made dependent on their efforts. For so it is according to the divine plan and arrangement.

#### RENOVATION OF THE EARTH.

It has been incidentally implied already that this grand evolution of the divine purposes concerning our race will include the destiny of our globe, and be attended with changes in its physical condition. At the epoch of the *parousia*, the process of renovation, which has gladdened the vision of inspired seers, and was foretold by our Lord and his apostles, will begin, to be continued and extended step by step, stage by stage, embracing new increments of territory, and new elements and increased facilities of social and individual happiness and refinement, till the earth shall be completely purified from the

effects of sin, freed from all natural as well as moral evil, and made fit for the abode of sinless beings. "Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever." (Isa. 32 : 16, 17.)

"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

. . . In the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitations of dragons, where each one lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." (Isa. 35 : 1 seq.)

All nature, animate and inanimate, will participate in this blessed consummation of the purpose of God by the Gospel. The condition of the lower animals will be ameliorated, their natures improved. "For we know that the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now" will experience deliverance. "For the earnest longing of the creation is waiting for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity, etc., in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. 8 : 19 seq.) So also Isaiah, referring to the same illustrious *æon* of the Messiah's beneficent sway: "Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf also shall

dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together ; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. 11 : 5 seq.; also 65 : 25.)

The precise nature and extent of this deliverance and transformation we may not know ; but the language is definite and specific, and there is nothing suggestive of highly-wrought imagery in the context. If these names are to be taken as representative of human character, we should be given to understand what particular character each animal represents. Otherwise the symbolism is unmeaning. To say that these are only varied designations of the mild and the fierce, the gentle and the ferocious, etc., is by no means a satisfactory explanation of language so specifically descriptive.

A large part of the prophecy of Isaiah consists of delineations of this happy period in the destiny of the earth and its inhabitants ; so also extensive portions of Jeremiah and Ezekiel ; and numerous other passages, both of the Old and New Testament, look to this state of the world for fulfilment. The work of renovation will advance to perfection. All the effects of sin will disappear. The original capacity of the earth for production and embellishment, every element of adaptation to the life of its inhabitants, will be restored and devel-

oped. The charms and joys of Eden will be more than renewed, and extended till the whole world shall become one unbroken Paradise, a "garden of God," a scene of perfect loveliness and rapturous delight. The land, the water, the sky, the air, trees, plants, flowers, every element and product of terrestrial nature, will receive new and perfect adaptations to the constitution and wants of the happy creatures placed here by divine beneficence.

#### A RENOVATED HUMANITY.

But the grand design and result of all these evolutions will be seen in a renovated and perfected humanity. As the age advances, and the Prince of peace extends his beneficent sway, discord and strife, oppression and wrong, degradation and want, will cease from among men. By the gentle power of love, or the holy awe of righteous authority, every turbulent spirit will be subdued, every unruly passion suppressed, every inordinate desire restrained. Under that perfect administration, righteousness and truth will regulate all human relations and intercourse; and perfect order and harmony will consequently prevail. The divine purpose, which was heralded by "a multitude of the heavenly host" at the Saviour's birth, will be consummated: "Peace on earth, good-will among men." There will come a universal reign of peace. The happy state of security and tranquillity promised specially to Israel will be enjoyed by other nations: "Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders: but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise. . . Thy people shall be all righteous." (Isa. 60: 18, 21.)

In that happy state of the world, the risen saints, re-

deemed from death and visibly united to Christ their living Head, will constitute the nucleus around which all the regenerate will gather in one universal, holy, harmonious, millennial church. And there will, at length, be experienced a complete answer to the petition which Jesus taught his disciples to repeat through all the years of gospel grace : " Thy kingdom come : thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Then will be fulfilled such prophecies as these : " All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord : and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's : and he is the governor among the nations." (Ps. 22 : 27, 28.) " All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee ; they shall sing to thy name." (Ps. 66 : 4.) " I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour out my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring : and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the watercourses. One shall say, I am the Lord's ; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob ; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." (Isa. 44 : 3 seq.) " They shall not hunger nor thirst ; neither shall the heat nor sun smite them : for he that hath mercy on them shall lead them, even by the springs of water shall he guide them. And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted. Behold, these shall come from far : and, lo, these from the north, and from the west," etc. (Isa. 49 : 10 seq. See also Isa. 61 : 6 seq. ; 62 : 2 seq. ; 65 : 23 seq.) " They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord : for

they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord : for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. 31 : 34.) Some of these prophecies relate primarily to the Jewish people ; and the fulfilment, as we have seen, will begin with them, and then extend to other peoples.

On this felicitous period of man's earthly existence Auberlen has the following appropriate remarks. They are not given, however, as an indorsement of his whole theory :—

" Now there exists *de facto* a Sabbath kept by transfigured men, continuously offering up a service in the purity and blessedness of a perfect spiritual life ; and it is evident to all that they who are thus near God, serving him, have power over the whole world. The priest-kings rule, therefore, simply in virtue of what they are. This is not a power working in an external mechanical manner ; it is a power certainly, but a power of attraction, of conviction, a power which influences and overcomes the heart. And if we remember that this power is not counteracted by either devil or beast, oh, who can imagine the glory of that future development of the kingdom of God, when all obstacles and enemies being removed, Christ and his saints will, by their spiritual rule, direct all external relations and circumstances ! It is then that Christianity will pervade the world and all relations of life, in spirit and in truth. The union of the royal and priestly office in the ruling saints will be mirrored in their kingdom upon earth in the union of Church and State, that is, in the *kingdom* of God, as distinguished from the mere church, which is at present still the form under which Christianity exists.



The kingdom is based on the royal, the kingdom of God and heaven on the priestly, office of the congregation. It shall then be manifest that, as *Röthe* expresses it, Christ is not merely a clericus, or pastor, but a high-priestly King. Spiritual-mindedness will manifest itself everywhere in corresponding, unfettered, external forms. 'Secular' and 'spiritual' are distinctions which shall then be overthrown. There will be no beast in opposition to the woman; then man will rejoice in God, and rejoice in the world. All poetry, all art, all science, all social life, will be Christian and worldly; for the world, the kingdoms of the world, are now the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ. Theocracy is now restored as Christocracy, not in the letter, but in essence and spirit. (Rev. 11:15.) It is upon this present earth that it must be shown and proved that the devil, who pretended to be its rightful lord, was only a usurper. Man, who was created 'to have dominion over the earth,' is to rejoice over *his* world, with full, unmixed, holy joy. Every legitimate and true ideal will then become a reality." (Dan. and the Rev., p. 336.)

#### AN OBJECTION ANSWERED.

But it is objected that glorified saints could not dwell in such a world as this. Their transfigured bodies could not conform to earthly conditions.

This objection rests on an unwarrantable assumption. Those who are Christ's will be restored to life, and changed, at his coming. They will put on immortality, be no more subject to death or any evil; but it is nowhere said that they will be immediately *glorified*, that is, invested with heavenly glory. They will not be

thus glorified while on earth. The body of Jesus was not glorified during the forty days he spent on earth after his resurrection. Neither will his followers be thus assimilated to heavenly conditions and relations till after the judgment, when they enter the heavenly state. Then, and not before, they will "go into life eternal," and "shine forth as the sun" in celestial glory. (Matt. 13 : 4 ; 25 : 46.)

But does not Paul say, "it is raised in glory"? Yes; but he says, too, there are different kinds or degrees of glory, corresponding to different states and natures. "There are heavenly bodies, and there are earthly bodies." And both these may be glorious in different degrees. "But the glory of the heavenly is one, and the glory of the earthly is another." (1 Cor. 15 : 40.) Those who have part in the first resurrection, on being crowned with immortality, will be, at once, transfigured in a degree to make them distinguishable from men in their natural mortal state. And to these renovated bodies the whole system and order of renovated nature will be adapted, as well as to the happier condition and completer development of the ordinary race.

But, moreover, it is not known that even saints glorified and fitted for heaven could not dwell happily on the earth in its renovated, millennial state. Beings of celestial nature, angels and Moses and Elijah, have visited our world just in its present state. This objection is therefore altogether hypothetical.

#### RELATIONS OF THAT PERIOD.

The question also arises necessarily, What will be the nature of human relations in that period of transformation?

On this subject there is nothing directly revealed. But, as the resurrection is not a new creation, but a restoration and enhancement of the former constitution, as the being which is restored will be identical, in its completeness, with the being which was dissolved by death, it seems to be a necessary inference that the relations will be similar or analogous to those which existed in the former state, only refined and perfected, and conformed to the advanced state of development and the more perfect order of things. Nor is it reasonable to suppose that relations which are founded on the original constitution of man were designed to subsist only during the period of man's degeneracy, and then, just when he is freed from the consequences of the fall, and restored to his original powers and possibilities, be at once and in every form and office abolished. Such an abolition would involve an entire change in the constitution of man, which is utterly inconsistent with the idea of a resurrection. It must be that there are higher purposes to be fulfilled by these relations in that age of renovation and transfiguration when the earth and man shall be redeemed from the curse of sin. In that restored pneumatic state when the *πνευμα*, the legitimate ruling power in man, shall resume its rightful authority, (lost by the fall), the selfish and unruly passions, appetites, and desires will be subdued, and the relations of life, being regulated according to the original design by the principles of holiness, truth, and love, will appear in their noblest forms, and fulfil their highest and most beneficent purpose. This applies specially to the risen saints.

As regards the relation of these "children of the resurrection" to those of common consecutive descent,

it must be that of manifest, inherent superiority, yet in the highest sense fraternal, as between brethren of the same race, who feel and cherish all the sacred ties of a common parentage and common hopes. Isaiah seems to refer to this relationship in the following passages, as indicated by the context (though, doubtless, with primary reference to the people of Israel, when gathered and restored, under the Messianic reign): "But ye shall be named the priests of the Lord: men shall call you the ministers of our God. Their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people. All that see them shall acknowledge them that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." (Isa. 61: 6, 9.) How appropriate to the ministration of risen saints, recognized by their personal appearance! See also 62: 12 and 65: 23, with contexts.

There will be nothing arbitrary or invidious in such distinction of those who are redeemed from death. There will be no unholy pride or ambition, no self-seeking or greed, on the one part, and therefore no envy, jealousy, or disaffection on the other. There will be no conflict of interests, and therefore no place for conflicting passions. It will be seen and felt that the relation harmonizes with the essential nature of moral being, and conforms, with perfect adaptation, to the nature of man, and that all is guided and regulated by infinite wisdom and beneficence. Good will and pure sympathy will meet everywhere with delightful reciprocity, and secure cordial acquiescence. And, as the "people will be all willingness" in that auspicious day, every regulation will find its responsive enforcement in the mind and heart. This relation involves no more incongruity, and is no

more difficult to apprehend, than that of men of different tribes, color, and refinement on earth, or that of men and angels in heaven.

And the same will be true of all other distinctions, whether of communities or individuals ; for surely there will be other distinctions in office and service, in rank and station. That must remain a social necessity, yet no longer dependent on adventitious fortune, or arbitrary appointment. In that state of perfect social order every one, as by spontaneous attraction and gravitation, will find and fill his proper place, and thus secure the greatest good to himself while he contributes most effectually to the common weal.

Israel, as the chosen people, and as the first entire nationality converted to Christ, will be ready to receive him at his coming, and will therefore enjoy a precedence among the nations. Through them, and among them, "he will lift up an ensign to the nations from far." (Isa. 5 : 26 ; and see passages already quoted.) Probably they will, as many suppose, enjoy a sacerdotal preëminence. The apostles will "sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19 : 28.) Some faithful servants will "have authority over ten cities," others over five. (Luke 19 : 17.) "Those for whom it is prepared will sit on the right hand, and on the left," of the King. (Matt. 20 : 23.) There will be greatest and there will be least in the kingdom. But all grades and distinctions will conform to the principles of true equality, which does not consist, according to the Maker's plan, in a monotonous, undistinguishable uniformity, but in a just and natural diversity. Perfect equality does not require sameness of position and office,

any more than of talents and features. A state of perfect uniformity would be utterly insufferable ; indeed, it is hardly conceivable, as it would destroy all individuality, and make every man identical with every other man. In such a state there could be no pleasure or advantage in " sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob,"—if, indeed, their personality would not be annihilated. All that is implied in a state of perfect equality is that every one fill faithfully the place, and act well the part, for which he is qualified by native endowment, and then that every one be esteemed according to his faithfulness. Thus every one, being equally faithful, would be equally esteemed, while every interest would be promoted, and every distinction forgotten in the common relation of fellow-creatures and fellow-servants of God. There would be " neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female—none of these as a ground of esteem or honor, but all would be one in Christ Jesus," their common Lord and King. A perfect union of mind and heart in sympathy and love, and therefore a perfect, recognized, rational equality.

#### MODERN DISBELIEF IN THE MILLENNIUM.

It is the drift of the age, strengthened by the prevailing modern orthodoxy, to ignore or mystify the personal coming of Christ, and his reign on the earth with his risen saints. In the early Christian centuries there was no question on this doctrine among the followers of Christ. They were all *Chiliasts*, as the writings of the Fathers show. But now, many Christians reject the doctrine openly ; others accept it cautiously and doubtfully ; others shrink from any expression of opinion on

the subject, and studiously avoid all allusion to it ; while many show remarkable acumen in allegorizing or etheralizing it into mere ideas and shadows. There is little faith in the predicted millennium, and but confused notions of it in the mind of most of those even who entertain some doubtful expectations of it. Many who would not be willing to be, and perhaps ought not to be, classed with "scoffers," are "saying, Where is the promise of his coming?" (2 Peter 3 : 4.) Even true believers are very generally ignorant of the blessed import of the prayer which they have been taught to repeat : "Thy kingdom come : thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." We seem to be already in this respect merging into the period contemplated in our Lord's inquiry, "But when the Son of man cometh will he find the faith on the earth?" (Luke 18 : 8.)

How much studied ingenuity and educated prejudice are displayed by interpreters in explaining away the Second Coming and first resurrection, and the subsequent millennial state ! And thus occasion is given to the artifices of imposture and the delusions of fanaticism. Such vagueness and emptiness cannot satisfy inquiring minds on a subject of so much importance ; and they are left exposed to any plausible heresy.

This so common method of interpretation would at most reduce the glorious triumph of the Gospel, prophetically represented as "the restitution of all things," to a mere gradual process of improvement, intellectual and moral, physical and social, by the common appliances of education, culture, and art, aided by the common means of grace, till the world shall become nominally evangelized, a more advanced Christian civilization

shall prevail, human society shall be regulated on more rational and philosophical principles, and prevailing evils will be abated or brought under more efficient control, and perhaps some of them done away ! It is true, " All nations are to be converted to Christ." But this, according to the theory before us, seems to mean nothing more than a general prevalence of some type of Christian civilization. There is to be a general spread of the Gospel. The nations are to accept it with favor, and admit its influence to some extent, in moulding their institutions and regulating their social and domestic state. By one and the same process, the nations are to be Christianized and Christianity is to be nationalized. Dr. Hodge states it thus : " That before the Second Advent there is to be the ingathering of the heathen : that the Gospel must be preached to all nations ; and also that there is to be a national conversion of the Jews ; but it is not to be inferred from this that either all the heathen or all the Jews are to become true Christians. In many cases the conversion will be merely nominal." (Syst. Theol., vol. iii. p. 812.) And then, according to the view he represents, Christ is to come to judgment and the earth is to be destroyed !!

And this is all we are to expect, so far as the earth and man's connection with it is concerned, from the execution of God's plan for the redemption and reclamation of our sin-ruined world ! A few thousand years of existence, mostly as a scene of ruin, desolation, and death ; and then the final conflagration ! Is this worthy of creative wisdom and power ? Away with all such low notions of the purpose which engaged the divine counsels in heaven and displayed the divine mercy on earth for the recovery of our



lost race and the restoration of our ruined world. God will show his almighty power, and infinite wisdom, and sovereign grace within the very precinct into which Satan entered and wrought ruin and death, by a complete renovation of this world, and by re-peopling it with the transfigured and regenerated sons and daughters of the race which he made to dwell in it. The happy destiny of our race and of our world will only begin to unfold when this period of renovation arrives. Renovation and restoration and development will be characteristic of the millennial *æon*, and progress will be aided by forces and facilities never known before. Unfulfilled prophecy cannot, without systematic perversion, be reconciled with any theory of interpretation which sets aside the personal reign of Christ on the earth, the resurrection of the dead who are his at his coming, and their association with him in his kingdom. Let these grand objects of Christian hope be kept in view, and let us so order our lives and conduct as to secure a "recompense at the resurrection of the righteous." (Luke 14 : 14.) "Happy and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection : on these the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." (Rev. 20 : 6.)

#### TIME OF THE SECOND ADVENT,

As regards the time of the Second Advent, any attempt to ascertain it definitely is impious presumption. We must rest content with our Lord's plain declaration : "Of that day and that hour no one knows, not even the angels of the heavens, but my Father only." (Matt. 24 : 36.) It will not do to refine upon this, and say we

may know the year, the month, or the week, if not the day or the hour, or even that we may know very approximately. All such refinements and all evasions meet a rebuke in the reply of Jesus to his disciples, when, after his resurrection, "they asked him, saying, Wilt thou at this time, restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not yours to know times or seasons which the Father has put in his own authority." (Acts. 1 : 7.) Our duty is to watch the signs of the times; and our great concern is to be always ready for the event. "For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." We know his appearance will be sudden: "For as the lightning cometh forth from the east and shineth even unto the west, so shall the coming of the Son of man be." (Matt. 24 : 27.)

But while we avoid presumptuous speculations and fanatical theories, and keep carefully within the range of distinct prophecy, let us not reject or mystify what is clearly revealed, and so shut out from view these bright hopes and prospects which are presented by the Gospel. Let us rather apply ourselves more sedulously and prayerfully to the study of the prophecies, open our minds and our hearts to the reception of inspired teaching, and learn all we can on this most important subject of heavenly communication.

### 3. THE LAST OR GENERAL RESURRECTION.

"Then the end, when he delivers up the kingdom to God the Father, when he shall have done away all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he has put all the enemies under his feet."

Dr. Hodge inquires, "What is the *end* here spoken

of ?" and then goes on to identify it with "the end" of which our Lord speaks in Matt. 24 : 6, 14. But the apostle's description of το τέλος, *the end*, as he employs it in this place, with the events by which it is distinguished, makes it plain that he refers to a different epoch from that to which our Lord applies the same term. In that passage Jesus was replying to the disciples' inquiry, "What will be the sign of thy coming and of the completion, or closing up, of the *æon*?" (τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος;) not "of the end of the world," as unhappily rendered into English. He enumerates a long series of adverse and afflictive events which are to characterize the closing period to which the inquiry refers, at which he tells them not to be troubled, as none of these betoken the immediate consummation of the age—"the end is not yet;" and then adds the final imminent sign of the close: "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a testimony to all nations; and then shall the end come." The subject under consideration was the "*finis hujus sæculi*," the end of this age, or mundane period, to be signalized by the παρουσία, or Second Advent of Christ, and to this the word τέλος, in that passage, is limited and applied. It relates therefore to the time when the millennial reign begins, and presents Christ, the Son, as assuming, rather than "delivering up, the kingdom." It represents the beginning (at least in its distinct earthly manifestation), and not the end, of that reign by which and during which "he puts all enemies under his feet," and "the kingdom of this world becomes our Lord's and his Christ's." There is nothing which looks beyond that point of time, in this eschatological discourse

of our Lord, till we arrive at the thirty-first verse of the twenty-fifth chapter. Then, having in the answer to his disciples' inquiries described his second coming, he passes very naturally to his last coming and the solemn and awful scene of the general Judgment. It is important to note that he employs the adversative particle, *δὲ*, to make this transition. The common version omits this entirely ; and the Bible Union has translated "and." It should be, "*But* when the Son of man shall come in his glory," etc., noting the transition to another subject.

But in this passage from Paul, "Then the end," the word *τέλος* has no such limitation. It is *το τέλος, κατ' ἐξοχήν*, THE END pre-eminently. Luthardt calls it "the absolute end ; the end of history." It is the end of the millennial reign. It marks the period when Christ's mediatorial work shall be completed, his mediatorial royalty be laid aside ; when, having put down all antagonistic rule and authority and power, and having put all enemies under his feet, he delivers up the kingdom to God the Father. It will be the end of the dominion and influence of Satan and of all the powers of darkness, when he and all his malignant host will be banished to the outer region prepared for them. It will be literally "the end of the world" as regards any present or previous cosmical form or order : "for the earth and the works therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3 : 10.) It will be attended with the general resurrection and the final judgment.

Paul, however, gives simply the order of the two great ranks of the resurrection attendant, the one upon the end of the age, the other upon the end of the world, with-

out any allusion to the interval between them. Neither does he say any thing here expressly on the subject of the second or final resurrection. But John is more explicit on both these points, and thus, as in the former case, supplements the revelation made by Paul. In his vision he "saw thrones, and they sat upon them;" and those who had part in the first resurrection "lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished." Then all "the dead, the great and the small," having been raised, appeared standing before the great white throne for judgment. (Rev. 20.)

It has been made a question whether this is to be taken as a literal thousand years, measured by the earth in its orbit, or a period of unknown length thus figuratively but indefinitely revealed. The question is not particularly important to us in any view. Whatever interests may be involved in it may be safely intrusted to him who controls "times and seasons by his own authority." But it seems most in harmony with specifications of time in other prophecies, some of which have been fulfilled, to regard it as a prophetic or symbolic round number representing an age of undefined duration, a cycle to be marked by the accomplishment of a specific purpose of God in regard to our race and world, namely, the complete deliverance and eternal security of his elect, by putting down all opposing authority and putting all enemies under Christ's feet, and the expurgation of the world from all the effects of sin. To accomplish this glorious purpose God will take whatever time is requisite, wisely regarding the best interests of all,

## THE CLOSING OF THE MILLENNIAL REIGN.

But we must note a brief transitional period, filled with sublime and terrific events, intervening between the close of the millennium and the great judgment-day. At the beginning of the millennial kingdom Satan is to be imprisoned in the abyss. But, for some inscrutable purpose in the divine administration, "When the thousand years are finished, Satan must be loosed out of his prison a little time" (Rev. 20 : 3, 7), and be permitted to roam at large again ; "and he will go out to mislead the nations that are in the four corners of the earth." He succeeds in gathering an innumerable host, who "go up on the breadth of the earth, and encompass the camp of the saints and the beloved city," the seat of the Messianic government.

The great Adversary seems, on being released from his confinement, instead of being subdued or humbled, to be more malignant, and more active and enterprising and successful in his temptations, and more desperate in his hostility to God, than ever before. And the race of men, or at least those of them who yield to his temptations, seem to have become capable of more enormous wickedness in proportion to the enlargement of their powers consequent on the advantages of enlightenment and culture which they have enjoyed during the peaceful and benignant reign of the Messiah ; for the benefits of his reign will naturally extend over all the earth, even to those nations, if any such there shall be, which do not submit formally to his sway. When men go so far as to engage in deliberate, organized rebellion against the manifest government of the Son of God with which they

have become obdurately familiar, and in open, active hostility against his saints, they exhibit a degree of daring impiety which would not shrink at the perpetration of any crime. Such a spirit of wickedness in mankind would, if left unrestrained, soon fill the world with much more than antediluvian violence. Doubtless the period from the time of Satan's release will be marked with horrid crimes, of which this last bold act of open treason against God will be the climax. But they will enjoy but brief impunity—only long enough to show their incorrigible character. The day of grace and forbearance for men will be past, and the period of respite for the devil and his angels will be ended. The day of doom will be hastened. Quite literally, "there will remain only a fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries."

#### CHRIST'S COMING TO JUDGMENT.

Let it be noted here, that the personal reign of Christ on the earth during the millennial period does not require or imply his constant presence on the earth. His occasional, and probably frequent, presence, to direct the administration in the hands of the saints of the first resurrection, who "shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Rev. 20 : 6 et al.), will be sufficient for every practical purpose and effect of his immediate personal rule. Other provinces of God's universal empire may equally engage his beneficent superintendency. We cannot conceive of that Infinite Being without whom "not any thing was made that was made," and "who upholdeth all things by the

word of his power," as confined, for any period or purpose, to earth.

And now, when every purpose of probation has been accomplished, when all that mercy could do has been done, when the day of grace has ended and the day of doom has come, the Son of man will assume the office of final Judge, adding the judicial to the regal character and authority, and will appear "in HIS glory," that is, in the unveiled splendor of his own heavenly glory, as never before seen on earth, coming at the head of the bright angelic hosts, to take his seat upon the throne of judgment. Clad in the robes of judgment as well as royalty, he "will come in his glory and all the angels with him ; and then will he sit on his throne of glory." (Matt. 25 : 31.) But the angels will attend now, not specially as ministers of mercy to the heirs of salvation, but as ministers of justice to execute judgment upon all the ungodly. "The Son of man will send forth his angels," not now, as at his Second Coming, "to gather together his elect," but "to gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and all those who do iniquity," to separate the wicked from among the just, preparatory to "casting them into the furnace of fire, where will be the wailing and the gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 24 : 31; 13 : 41, 49.) The assembled hosts of Gog and Magog encamped in hostile array around "the camp of the saints and the beloved city" will suddenly "be devoured by fire coming down from God out of heaven. And the devil who misled them will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where are also the beast and the false prophet," and whither, in pursuance of the judgment, all the enemies of God, all whose names are not found written in the book



of life, must soon follow and share their eternal doom. (Rev. 20 : 10, 15.)

Thus Paul and John together furnish the key to the prophecies which relate to the last things. From these distinctions in the order, time, and character of coming events, so clearly made by them, we are able to discriminate and apply predictions which stand in less definite connections ; such for instance as the following, which will have their fulfilment in the final transitional period now under consideration. Observe that these involve alike the fate of our race and the catastrophe of our world.

The conclusion of the parable of the tares as explained by Jesus himself : " As therefore the tares are gathered up and are burned with fire, so shall it be at the ending of the *æon*. The Son of man will send forth his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of offence, and those who do iniquity, and will cast them into the furnace of fire ; there will be the wailing and the gnashing of teeth ! Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (Matt. 13 : 40 seq.) It is evident that the sowing of the tares represents the whole work of Satan down to his instigation of the rebellion of Gog and Magog ; and the gathering and disposition of the harvest represents the final destiny of the race.

The parable of the draw-net has a similar conclusion and the same application. When the net was *full*, the utmost purpose for which it was cast into the sea accomplished, " they drew it upon the beach, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." A final separation of the wicked from among the righteous. (Matt. 13 : 47 seq.)

It should be observed that, in both these parables, the *συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος* refers to the *ending*, not of the present, but of the millennial *æon*, which is brought to view in the context, and to which therefore the terms must apply.

The parable of the marriage of the king's son derives the clew to its interpretation from the same august period. "The idea of judgment," says Lange, "is predominant throughout the whole parable." And this idea finds full expression in the closing application to the awards of the final judgment: "Many are called, but few chosen." (Matt. 22 : 1-14.)

"For the Son of man will come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then will he reward each one according to his work." (Matt. 16 : 27.) In the paragraph of which this is the conclusion, the Saviour deduces the *final state* of the soul from the conditions of discipleship: "Whoever will save his life shall lose it; and whoever may lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man will come," etc. The connection shows, therefore, that our Lord refers here, not to the time when he will come to reign on the earth, but to the time when he will come to "judge the world in righteousness," and render to every one according to his deeds. This passage, therefore, corresponds to Matt. 25 : 31 seq.

The first chapter of 2 Thessalonians refers evidently to the same period of final consummation and judgment. No doubt one design of the second epistle to the Thessalonians was to correct erroneous impressions in their minds

on the subject of Christ's Second Coming—impressions derived apparently from a forged letter purporting to be from Paul which had been circulated among them, and perhaps also from misconstruction of a passage in the former epistle, (ch. 4 : 15-18.) But another, and no less prominent, design of the apostle in this epistle was to comfort and encourage the Thessalonian brethren in the severe trials and sufferings to which they were subjected from the cruelty of their persecutors. And this first engages his attention, and gives direction to the train of thought in the first chapter. For this purpose he directs their thoughts to the best possible source of consolation and support in trial—the saints' final rest : " To you who are afflicted, rest with us." So the Saviour said, " Happy are ye when they shall revile and persecute you ; for great is your reward in heaven." (Matt. 5 : 11, 12.) He represents their growing faith, and abounding love and patient endurance, under such afflictions and persecutions, and also the cruelty and injustice of their oppressors, as a token (or proof, *ἔνδειγμα*) of the righteous judgment of God, and sure execution of justice, in a future day. The main point is, that since God is a perfect governor, and since justice does not have its course here, it must have hereafter. The patient sufferings of the righteous, and the violence and impunity of the wicked, in this world, are therefore an infallible proof and presage of a future day of retribution, when the destiny of all will be finally settled on principles of exact justice. Then every one will receive his just recompense, and find rest with God, or be banished from his presence forever : " if indeed it is a righteous thing with God to recompense affliction to those who afflict you,

and to you who are afflicted rest with us, at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power, in flame of fire taking vengeance on those who know not God, and those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall meet the demand of justice, eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all who believed." This passage must, therefore, relate to the time when Christ will appear for final judgment. The same general principles, with the same design and application, are presented in Phil. 1 : 28 and 1 Peter 1 : 4-8, 13, and 4 : 12-14.

Those expositors who (like Ellicott, Riggenbach, Lillie) understand this passage as referring to the Second Advent are obliged to admit that it has also a forward view to the awards of the final judgment day. Ellicott remarks, "The apostle's argument is that their endurance of suffering in faith is a token of God's righteous judgment and of a future reward, which will display itself in rewarding the patient sufferers, as surely as it will inflict punishment on their persecutors."

It is a fact to be noted that the word *παρουσία*, which is uniformly employed in the New Testament to denote Christ's Second Coming, does not occur in this passage. Instead of that we find *ἀποκάλυψις*, *revelation* : "at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with the angels of his power." This suggests such a manifestation of his heavenly glory and power as had never before been witnessed in our sphere. It is that ineffable manifestation of him who is, at once, Son of man and Son of God, which will be made when he ap-

pears in robes of judgment "seated on the throne of his glory." Similarly, Paul speaks of "the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." (Rom. 2 : 5.)

There is a remarkable coincidence between the predictions of Paul in this first chapter of 2 Thessalonians and the revelations made to John on the same subjects. (Rev. 20 : 7 seq.) Here the flaming fire in which the Lord will be revealed is represented, not only as a manifestation of his glory (Ellicott et al.), but also as the instrument of vengeance upon the ungodly and the rejectors of Christ: "the terrible splendor of his majesty which consumes all opposition." (Riggenbach in Lange.) There, the rebel hosts of Gog and Magog are represented as "devoured by fire coming down from God out of heaven." Thus they are destroyed from off the earth; but this is not their final doom. In both passages the final judgment follows; and retribution according to every one's works closes the solemn drama. Then Christ will "be glorified in his saints," and his saints will be glorified with him. Enough in this surely, if properly considered, to sustain the disciples of Christ in all the sufferings to which they may be subjected for his sake.

After presenting these considerations to console and encourage the Thessalonian brethren in their persecutions and afflictions, the apostle proceeds, in the second chapter, to correct their impression that "the day of the Lord [his Second Coming] was at hand." And, note, he immediately employs the word *παρουσία* (*parousia*).

Peter foretells this last crisis of the earth and man in language which is explicit and vivid. After referring

to the destruction by the deluge, he adds : " But the heavens that now are, and the earth, by his word are kept in store, being reserved for fire unto the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." The Lord is long-suffering, and protracts the period of grace, " not willing that any should perish. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief ; in which the heavens will pass away with a rushing noise, and the elements will be dissolved with burning heat, and the earth and the works therein will be burned up. Since therefore all these things dissolve, what kind of men ought ye to be, etc., looking for and earnestly regarding the coming of the day of God, by which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved, and the elements will melt with burning heat?" (2 Peter 3 : 7 seq.)

Jude looks forward to the same decisive period, repeating and adopting an ancient prophecy of Enoch : " Behold the Lord came among his holy myriads, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly among them of all their acts of ungodliness which they committed, and of all the hard things which ungodly sinners spoke against him." (Jude 14 seq.) See also Heb. 12 : 26 seq.; 2 Peter 2 : 6.

Similar views of the last things seem to have passed in vision before the seers of more ancient times : " Behold the day of Jehovah cometh, cruel with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate : and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light : the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. And I will punish the world for evil, and the wicked for their iniquity.

. . . I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of Jehovah of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger." (Isa. 13 : 6 seq.) This is spoken in connection with "the burden of Babylon." But it could not be fulfilled in judgments upon any one nation. It must include the whole earth as its theatre of accomplishment, nay, and extend to the material heavens. It must reach forward typically to the closing scene of temporal things. So John makes Babylon a prophetic symbol in revealing the last times. (Rev. 17 : 5 seq.) "All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll : and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine and as a falling fig from the fig-tree." (Isa. 34 : 4 seq.) "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage ; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it." (24 : 19, 20.) "They [the earth and the heavens] shall perish, but thou shalt endure ; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment ; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed." (Ps. 102 : 26.) "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath ; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner," etc. (Isa. 51 : 6.) See also Ezek. chaps. 38 and 39 ; Mal. 4 : 1.

#### FINAL CONFLAGRATION.

From these and similar predictions we learn that the earth will be finally destroyed by fire. But this destruc-

tion will not take place at the second coming of Christ : it will be attendant on his third appearing in the sphere of humanity, when he will come for the final judgment of our race. Under the millennial reign, the men of flesh and blood will be held in subjection to righteous authority, and kept in just restraint, by a perfect administration of justice and guardianship of rights. Perfect order, harmony, and peace will prevail in human society, wherever the Messiah extends his sway, until he rules in all the earth. But this peaceful state will be the result of perfection in the government rather than of unexceptional virtue in the people. There will be many who will render obedience rather from awe than love of the Ruler. And when Satan, after his thousand years' imprisonment, is released to ply again his seductive arts, he finds many who are the willing subjects of his enticements, ready to join the forces of Gog and Magog in the great and last rebellion. Then vengeance will sleep no longer. The earth will be wrapped in sheets of flame, and dissolved to its primitive elements.

From this terrific conflagration there will be no escape for the workers of iniquity then on the earth. They will perish inevitably. "For the day cometh that shall burn as an oven ; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble : and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." (Mal. 4 : 1.) But, note, this is not extinction of being. Material fire cannot destroy the soul. This we know from the scriptures. (Matt. 10 : 28). Neither can it annihilate the body. No such effect of fire is known or revealed to us. The ashes and dispersed elements, like those of all the dead,



will remain from the burning, to be recombined and revived again at the sound of the trump of God. There will be no such boon as annihilation for the wicked. Those who sink amid the final conflagration will perish from the earth by the stroke of death, like those of previous generations, and go to join the ranks of the last resurrection, and mingle in the throng which will stand before the last tribunal. But the faithful in Christ, "who love his appearing," will be caught away from the dissolving wreck of nature, enjoy security in their Lord's protection, and await, confidently and joyfully, the consummation of the purposes of his grace.

Thus will our world be purified by fire from all the dross which sin has infused into it. Passing through this dread crucible of just and holy wrath, its elements will be refined, and prepared for the new mundane structure in which God will employ them. See Isa. 65 : 17 ; 66 : 22. Rev. 21 : 1. Then, "he who sits upon the throne will say, Behold, I make all things new." (Rev. 21 : 5.) For "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Peter 3 : 13.)

In this new cosmical system, and perfect order of things, doubtless the earth is destined to fill an essential place and serve a glorious purpose. We cannot entertain the thought that it will be untenanted by intelligent creatures of God. It will be the blissful abode of some happy race—perhaps our own, in a future stage of blessedness. So some think, not without reason. It will become a happy mansion in the eternal Father's house. But it is not important to the subject of the present treatise, if it were possible, to pursue this line of destiny farther.

## ALL ENEMIES PUT UNDER CHRIST'S FEET.

We have seen from the sure word of prophecy that there will remain enemies of Christ unreconciled, awed into submission and held in order by the hand of just and beneficent power, under a perfect government, but ready for an occasion of open rebellion, up to the very close of the millennial reign ; and that an object in protracting his reign on the earth is to "put all enemies under his feet." This is necessary to complete the work of redemption which he has undertaken. All enemies must be, not only subjugated, but completely subdued—"put under his feet." The perfect salvation and eternal security of his people require this : for every enemy of Christ is an enemy of his people. Enemies are sinners, violators of God's law, of any race ; and sin is contagious. While one enemy remains unsubdued, the contagion of sin and spirit of rebellion is sure to spread from him to disturb God's government and imperil the security and felicity of his saints. Every enemy *must* be put under his feet to finish the execution of his work. For this purpose "all power was given to him in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28 : 18) ; and he will retain and exercise his kingly office as Son of man, till every enemy is either reconciled or adjudged to eternal banishment. (Ps. 72 : 8 ; 110 : 1, 2 ; John 13 : 3 ; Eph. 1 : 20, 21, 22 ; Phil. 2 : 9, 10, 11 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 15 ; Heb. 1 : 2 seq. ; 2 : 7 seq. ; 1 Peter 3 : 22 ; Rev. 1 : 5 seq. ; 11 : 15 ; 12 : 10 ; 17 : 14 ; 19 : 16 ; et al.)

After "Satan has been loosed out of his prison," excited the nations to their last act of rebellion, instigated the last desperate assault upon "the camp of the saints

and the beloved city," after "fire from God out of heaven has devoured" the hostile battalions, and the prince of evil himself has been "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," his power forever crushed, his malignant career ended, no enemy nor principle of enmity to God's government will remain unsubdued. Sin with its curse and ruin will cease, except in the state and place of the lost. The dark history of moral depravity will be ended. The record of human guilt will be finished : and so also the record of the guilt of fallen angels involved in Satan's rebellion, and thenceforth his active emissaries in carrying on the temptation of our race ; for we are told that angels who sinned and kept not their first estate, are "kept in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." (2 Peter 2 : 4 ; Jude 6.) The record of faith and salvation "in the Lamb's book of life" will also be completed. (Rev. 21 : 27.) The work of the recording angel, as preliminary to the judgment, will be finished. There will be no more probationary entries to make in God's book of remembrance. Time for probationary purposes will be no more. The basis of judgment will be perfected with every requisite datum and manifestation by which all "the dead may be judged, each one according to his works" (Rev. 20 : 13), and every intelligent creature of God, throughout his universal domain, may see the justice of the final judgment, and be ready to join in one harmonious Amen !

Then all "the dead, the great and the small," will be raised and "stand before the throne." The sea, death, and Hades, will give up the dead that are in them. The books will be opened ; and the judgment will proceed.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

ON this part of our subject it is scarcely worth while to give much attention to the various theories and speculations of men of more ingenuity than faith, by which a specific final day of judgment has been set aside. The opinion maintained by some, that the sentence which fixes every man's eternal state is pronounced, once for all, at the hour of his death, and that there will be no final public announcement of judgment, will find no approval in the mind of any candid, intelligent reader of the Bible. Still more in conflict with the dictates of common sense and common observation, as well as opposed to the Word of God, is the doctrine taught by some that judgment is in continuous progress, and all the ends of justice are met in God's dealings with men in the present life. Everybody knows better. The fortunes of men in this life have but a very imperfect and doubtful relation to their virtues and vices. The good suffer adversity, the bad enjoy prosperity ; and these allotments often distinguish the whole course of life. Temporal judgments and mercies seem to be dispensed indiscriminately : they fall alike to the lot of the righteous and the wicked. This is forcibly illustrated in times of public calamity, war, pestilence, or famine. The good and the bad, the guilty and the innocent, suffer without distinction of character.

We see God's righteous judgment displayed in what befalls nations. They cannot, as organizations, be judged,

and punished or rewarded, hereafter ; therefore judgment overtakes them here. Hence national sins are visited with earthly judgments. The prophet announces the divine method of dealing with wicked nations when he says, " If they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith Jehovah" (Jer. 12 : 17). And all history confirms the declaration. There is enough in this to display the character of God as a perfect Governor and righteous Judge. Verily, " He will judge the world in righteousness." (Ps. 9 : 8 ; Acts 17 : 31.) " Righteousness and judgment are the foundation of his throne." (Ps. 97 : 2). But we see nothing like individual retribution in this world. Only in rare instances, and as if by chance, do we witness exemplary punishment for personal sins, or reward for personal righteousness. Yet perfect justice must have reference to individual character and conduct. Strict justice demands that " every man shall give account of *himself* to God." It is therefore necessary to the perfection of the divine administration, as before remarked, that there be a future day of judgment, and state of final retribution. The wicked must not go always unpunished, the righteous unrewarded.

Scarcely more deserving of consideration in the light of revealed truth is the idea advanced by some recent theologians and commentators, that there is to be a protracted period, or *æon*, of judgment, to be distinguished by a series of judicial acts and decisions and executions, involving and determining the final doom of men, and the future condition of our world, and that such a period is designated by " the judgment day." Doubtless there will be, as there have been, epochs of special

judgment at the winding up of the career of nations and governments, and the disruption of social systems and institutions, and at the close of dispensations in the divine economy. But none of these have any special relation to man's final destiny. None of them, nor all of them together, supersede or fill the place of the sublime judgment of the great day which is made the subject of revelation.

All such ideal interpretations as those which have been referred to proceed from some species of allegorizing which sets aside the plain declarations of Scripture, such as these : " God hath appointed *a day* in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained." (Acts 17 : 31.) " In *the day* when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my gospel." (Rom. 2 : 6.) " Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in *the day* of judgment." (Matt. 12 : 36.) " We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ." (Rom. 14 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 10.) " The Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust in punishment unto *the day* of judgment." (2 Peter 2 : 9.) " That we may have boldness in *the day* of judgment." (1 John 4 : 17.) John, in prophetic vision, " saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne. And the books were opened ; and the dead were judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works." (Rev. 20 : 12.) Such Scriptures as these, which speak so distinctly of " the day of judgment," " that day," " the day when God will judge the world," " the judgment of the great day," etc., cannot be divested of their plain, obvious significancy. They designate a definite future event—a time fixed and appointed when

all our race will be assembled before God for judgment. And what a travesty upon plain, vivid description is any allegorical or mystical interpretation of the solemn and graphic representation of the judgment scene given by our Lord in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew ! Nothing is more clearly revealed than that there is to be a day, not a protracted period, but a specific time, of judgment. The following points therefore demand our consideration :

#### I. WHO WILL BE THE JUDGE ?

Peter gives direct answer : " Him [Jesus of Nazareth] God raised on the third day, and showed him openly. . . And he commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is he who has been appointed by God to be judge of the living and dead." (Acts 10 : 42.) See also Matt. 16 : 27 ; John 5 : 22 ; Acts 17 : 31 ; Rom. 2 : 16 ; 14 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 5 : 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 1, 8 ; Jude 15 ; and the sublime description Matt. 25 : 31 seq.

So then Christ will be the Judge. He who was once " despised and rejected of men," hated and persecuted by those whom he came to save, given up at length to a lawless mob by a weak and vacillating judge, barbarously insulted and tortured, and put to an ignominious death without the forms of justice, will sit enthroned in regal majesty and glory to decide the eternal destiny of men. " The Son of man will sit upon the throne of his glory. And before him will be gathered all the nations," to receive the sentence which will fix every one's unalterable state. The benignant offices of Mediator and Intercessor will be exchanged for the stern office of the Judge. He who once " humbled himself, and became

obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," will sit as the sovereign, almighty, inflexible, Dispenser of eternal life and death. Yet, when we remember that he submitted to all this humiliation and abuse and suffering voluntarily for our sake, we cannot doubt his clemency. His character will not be changed. He will be the same compassionate Jesus who once wept over sinners, and who died to save them. But the means of salvation which mercy provided will be exhausted, and every one's character fixed by his acceptance or rejection of the terms of pardon. Justice must take its course now, without any mediatorial intervention. It will be essential to the consummation of the scheme of grace that "he judge in righteousness," and "reward every one according to his works."

While there will be a manifestation of resplendent glory beyond our powers of conception in the person and throne and retinue of Christ the Judge, his essential glory will appear in the judgment : (a) In his omniscience. No act of life, or element of character, will escape his penetrating glance. With perfect discrimination "he will divide them one from another as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats." (b) In his perfect justice, made manifest to all as the result of his own essential righteousness. (c) In his grace, never before magnified as it will be in the disclosures of that day when it will be made to appear with how much long-suffering God has endured the vessels of wrath, while despising his grace and fitting themselves for destruction, and what is the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy (Rom. 9 : 22, 23). (d) In his power, exhibited in the immediate execution of sentence and the silent



acquiescence of all the innumerable throng of angels and men. All will know and feel that justice and mercy, righteousness and goodness, truth and love, personated in the Judge, have found perfect utterance in the decision of every individual case. "Every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess to God." (Rom. 14 : 11.)

How fitting that he who is, at once, Son of man and Son of God should be our Judge ! As Son of man, "he knows our feeble frame," and can regard us with fellow-feeling and compassion. As Son of God, he can bring into exercise every attribute of infinite perfection in judging and executing.

## 2. WHO WILL BE JUDGED ?

Some say, Christians, only, *i.e.*, nominal Christians, those who lived in what are called Christian lands. Others say, those who are *not* Christians, the heathen, those who lived where false religions held sway. Such notions may be passed over as factitious and arbitrary. Their refutation, if they need any, will appear as we advance.

There is some plausibility in the opinion advocated by Olshausen, Stier, and Alford, that there are to be two distinct days, or set times of judgment, connected, respectively, with the two resurrections. They hold to a premillennial judgment, in which "those who are Christ's at his coming," and are raised from the dead or changed at that time, will be judged before sharing in the privileges and blessings of the millennial kingdom ; and that therefore they will not be included in the final judgment at the consummation of all things. But this is inconsistent with the universality of the terms and

forms of expression employed in our Lord's description of the general judgment, and in other passages which refer to the same subject. "Before him shall be gathered all the nations." (Matt. 25 : 32.) It seems like a very unnatural limitation, in this closing act of Christ's mediatorial reign, to confine the phrase *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, "*all the nations*," to the *heathen* nations, as Stier has done, or to those who were not included in the first resurrection and transformation at Christ's second coming, as Alford has done. Again we read, "We must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to the things which he did, whether good or bad." (2 Cor. 5 : 10 ; Rom. 14 : 10-12.) And again, "I saw the dead, the great and the small, stand before the throne ; . . . and they were judged, every one." (Rev. 20 : 12 seq.) All the race must be included.

But it is asked, Why should those be judged who have already "had part in the first resurrection," and shared in the honors and blessings of the Messiah's kingdom ? The same question may be asked, with a similar reason, in regard to all the dead. Death sealed their doom ; and they were assigned to their appropriate place in the realm of departed spirits—a place of joy, or of woe. And "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave." (Eccl. 9 : 10.) There is no transformation of character, nor reversal of destiny, beyond the tomb. Dr. Lange has some remarks which are in point here : "The judgment appears to be already internally decided by the relation which men have assumed toward Christ, or the character which they have borne ; but it is published openly by the separation of

those who are unlike, and the gathering together of all who are like ; it is continued in the sentence which illustrates the judgment by words, and confirms it by the extorted confession of conscience ; it is consummated by the fact of the one company's inheriting the kingdom, and the other's departing to the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Com. on Matt. p. 450.)

We do not know all the purposes of God to be accomplished by the awful solemnities of the final judgment day. Other races besides our own, probably throughout God's universal dominion, are to be regarded in closing up this earthly order of things, and in settling and executing the claims of justice, and deciding and publishing the results of human conduct and existence, and the eternal destiny of men. God's government, and the well-being of all the creatures of his power, are concerned ; and, to make the history and destiny of our race subserve the highest, deepest, widest moral purposes, employs an infinity and eternity of wisdom of which we can have little conception now, but which the judgment-scene will illustrate to human as well as angelic apprehension.

The closing up of an order of things which has extended through a series of mundane ages filled with the deeds and devices, the struggles and conflicts, the joys and sorrows, and all the complicated events and conditions, which make up the probationary career of a race for which the Son of God submitted to humiliation and death, is a matter of too much importance to be permitted to pass without a profound and universal moral impression. God will signalize the grand event by a public solemn display which will illustrate all his holy attri-

butes, and make an original impression upon all his intelligent creatures of every rank and race, of the perfection and glory of his government, and "the exceeding riches of his grace." For, in this case, to make public signifies to make known to all the subjects of the divine government throughout the wide range of intelligent being.

And the redeemed of our own race will apprehend in the revelations of that day, as never before, what they were and what the grace of God has made them, the capacities with which he has endowed them, the relations in which he has placed them, and the destiny for which he has prepared them. Hence they say in overwhelming astonishment at the announcement of the Judge, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, thirsty, naked, etc., and ministered unto thee?" Such an impression made upon them will transform and elevate their whole nature, awaken new impulses within them, and prepare them to enter upon the new and exalted plane of being to which they are about to be introduced.

We must understand, then, that all mankind—not those only who will be living when the end comes, nor those who were not included in the first resurrection, nor any distinct portion of the race—but every individual of "all the nations," and generations from the beginning to the end of man's earthly state, will appear before the tribunal of Christ the Judge, on that solemn day. This accords with the uniform tenor, and with many express declarations, of the Scriptures.

Under this head of the subject, therefore, it is only necessary further to repeat more distinctly a suggestion already made. There are several passages which seem

to indicate quite clearly that the doom of fallen angels will be finally adjudged on the same great day—if not in the same, in a concurrent act of judgment. The demons cast out of the man among the tombs recognized Jesus as their sovereign arbiter and final Judge. Hence the “legion,” speaking through the man possessed, cried out, “I beseech thee torment me not,” and “do not command us to go away into the abyss.” (Luke 8 : 26 seq.) They knew that their fate depended on his word, that he could remand them to their prison-house, and that he would pronounce their ultimate doom ; and they trembled in his presence. Thus, “the demons believe” in Jesus the Son of God ; but only “believe and tremble.” (James 2 : 19.) Peter tells us that “God spared not the angels that sinned, but having hurled them down to Tartarus, consigned them to caverns of darkness, kept in custody unto the judgment.” (2 Peter 2 : 4.) Jude makes a similar revelation : “Angels who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he has kept in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.” (Jude 6.) The context of both these remarkable passages (quoted for another purpose on p. 68) shows distinctly that the day referred to is the same great crisis in which the race of man will be judged. Our Lord assures us, in connection with the promise of the Holy Spirit to give effect to the Gospel, that Satan himself, “the prince of this world has been judged.” (John 16 : 11.) That is, judgment was initiated, or, as M. Henry says, “entered against him, and in part executed,” through the imminent death and resurrection of Christ. And we know from Rev. 20 : 10. when his doom will be consummated. It will

be after his last act of rebellion in exciting the hosts of Gog and Magog. In this judgment to be passed upon the rebel angels, as appears from 1 Cor. 6 : 3, the saints will be associated as assessors with Christ. Alford makes this mean "*good* angels ;" but he adds, as well he may, "exactly *how* is not revealed to us." How, or why, holy angels should be brought into judgment, is quite incomprehensible. Evidently the apostle speaks of *fallen* angels who will be judged, on the same great day, by the Redeemer and the redeemed of the race whose ruin they sought to consummate.

### 3. WHEN WILL THE GENERAL JUDGMENT TAKE PLACE ?

We cannot decide this point chronologically. It is among "the times and seasons which the Father hath put in his own authority." (Acts 1 : 7.) We have already traced up the succession of prophetic events, and found its place in the appointed order, and therefore need only recapitulate summarily, and note the application, here. It will be when every purpose of our probationary state has been accomplished, when every form and appliance of moral influence and motive by which character can be developed has been brought to bear upon the family of man ; when the world of mankind has passed through every appointed, perhaps every possible, earthly change and state ; when "this gospel of the kingdom" has been proclaimed throughout the millennial years, and salvation has been offered in every form and phase of winning presentation ; when every expedient of mercy has been employed, and God's forbearance with incorrigible sinners is exhausted. Throughout the whole career of fallen man God's mercy

is conspicuous. "The Lord is not slow in respect to the promise, as some count slowness ; but is long-suffering toward us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3 : 9.) In comparison with his general dealing with his creatures, "judgment is his strange work." (Isa. 28 : 21.) But he will, at last, "lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet ;" and then will come the stern inversion of the inspired declaration, "Judgment rejoiceth against mercy." (James 2 : 13.)

It will be when, by the termination of the career of probation allotted to our race, the results of human conduct and influence are complete. Before that time justice could not be made conspicuous in judgment, to finite intelligences. The amount of good or ill resulting from any man's course of life, or even particular acts of his life, cannot be known till the last generation has passed away and earthly records are closed. For influence, however exercised, spreads and extends onward to the end of time. Its results can be summed up only from the imprint of universal and individual character as it will be exhibited in the day of final reckoning. For instance, to make any just estimate of the benefits to the world of such a life as that of Paul would bring into requisition the whole history of Christianity, the whole record and progress of the dissemination of the Gospel. On the other hand, an estimate of the results of such a life as that of Volney or Voltaire must involve a long, dark succession of depravity and guilt and crime and wretchedness, flowing onward, like a tide of ruin, through all subsequent generations. Every one's life, and probably every act of every one's life, starts a wave

of influence which will sweep onward, for good or ill, over all succeeding generations. All these multiplied effects of example and influence must be revealed in the judgment that, in the view of all his intelligent creatures, "God may be just when he speaks, and pure when he judges." (Ps. 51 : 4 ; Rom. 3 : 4.)

It will be after Satan has been released from his imprisonment—for some unknown purpose, but apparently to act his part in the last stage of man's state of trial—and has committed his last act of treason against the divine government ; after men who were not proof against his temptations have joined the hosts of Gog and Magog in their last, boldest act of rebellion. It will be immediately after the general resurrection, so that all mankind, of all the nations and generations, may be assembled before the judgment-throne.

#### 4. WHERE WILL THE GENERAL JUDGMENT TAKE PLACE ?

On this point the Scriptures say nothing directly. Doubtless, however, the scene will occupy a definite locality. From the essential constitution of our minds we cannot separate events from localities ; and this original intuition of the soul must not be treated as illusory. It is divine. We shall have occasion to refer to it again.

Some vain speculators, giving loose rein to imagination, have laid the scene in some remote, indeterminate sphere, or in some place in mid-æther fitted up for the occasion. Others have located it before the great white throne in heaven. The Jews, on the other hand, adopted the opinion, from the third chapter of Joel principally, that it will occur in the valley of Jehoshaphat, near



Jerusalem. But the idea of locality demands space, as well as place, for the sublime proceeding. That valley, unless enlarged so much as to destroy its identity, could not contain the assembled "multitudes." (Joel 3 : 14.) Probably no one now seriously entertains that opinion.

That the central locality of the scene will be on the earth is a rational conclusion. It seems fit that this world, which has been the theatre of the life and actions and fortunes of the race whose destinies are the main subject of decision, should be the scene of the judgment. Nowhere else could the moral effect be made so distinct and impressive. On this orb man was created, and passed his probationary stage ; here Satan entered as the arch-adversary of God and man, and has ruled with usurped power as " prince of this world ;" here sin has displayed its malignancy, and wrought its baleful effects ; hither the Son of God descended, and here he effected the work of redemption by his sufferings and death ; here he will reign with his saints in his mediatorial kingdom : surely this is the fitting place for publishing the awards of human destiny, and consummating the plan of redemption in the final judgment.

Moreover, the Scriptures speak indirectly to this point. Christ, speaking from an earthly standpoint, represents himself as "*coming in his glory*" to judge the world. (Matt. 25 : 31 ; 16 : 27.) *Coming to the earth* is the only natural acceptation of this language. In correspondence with this, Paul, referring to the same grand event, speaks of " the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ *from heaven* with the angels of his power." (2 Thess. 1 : 7.) Other passages contain the same local allusion.

Nor is there any difficulty in this view from the fact

that "the earth and the works therein will be burned up." (2 Pet. 3 : 10.) The conflagration may not be continuous. After the descent of the first sheet of flame, in which the enemies of Christ, confederate with the hosts of Gog and Magog, will perish, and before the final and complete destruction, there may be an interval of solemn repose, during which the judgment will occur. This may, very naturally, be inferred from the passages which foretell these closing events. John, with the judgment specially in view, and describing the events immediately preceding and attending it, predicts the fiery destruction of the adherents of Gog and Magog ; while Peter, having in view the last catastrophe of this frame of nature, predicts the final and complete conflagration. Or, even if the earth were previously destroyed, "he who sits upon the throne," with power and purpose to "make all things new," can, if he please, as an instantaneous preparation for the judgment, restore the ruin sufficiently for that purpose.

#### 5. WHAT WILL BE THE ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES?

With our present powers of conception we can form but a poor idea of the solemn grandeur and stupendous sublimity of the judgment scene. Enough is revealed, if we study the inspired representations and allusions, to transcend all the powers of imagination, and fill us with amazement. The Son of man, in the united office of King and Judge, robed in divine majesty and glory, will be seated on a throne of heavenly splendor. Who can form an adequate idea of that throne of pure celestial light, and the Being, "glorious in holiness," who sits upon it? "All the holy angels," the bright and glori-

ous ranks and orders of cherubim and seraphim, dominions and principalities and powers, with all their angelic trains, will be attendant as interested witnesses of the judgment, and ministers of the Judge. "The first-born of God, the morning stars of creation, beings that excel in strength, whose intelligence is immense, whose love for God and his universe glows with a quenchless ardor. Who can count their numbers?" (Lange.) All there. All mankind, of every tribe, and family, and generation, the innumerable ranks of the quickened dead, will be there awaiting, in solemn awe, the judicial announcement of their future eternal state. Well might Bengel, contemplating the innumerable concourse, exclaim, "*Omnes angeli, omnes nationes : quanta celebritas !*"

Amid this awful pomp and solemnity, those who stand before the throne to be judged seem rapt with amazement, from which they are aroused by the voice of the Judge deciding their future eternal lot, and recounting the facts of their former state. The concourse on either hand are alike surprised at the utterances from the judgment throne. Memory, quickened by the brief but comprehensive review which constitutes the basis of judgment, rushes back over the past, but finds nothing in the reminiscences of the former life to correspond with the solemn recital. And they answer, "Lord, when saw we thee hungering, thirsting, naked, sick, etc., and ministered, or ministered not, unto thee?" The explanatory words of the Judge make all plain to their apprehension : "Inasmuch as ye did it, or did it not, to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it, or did it not, to me." Conviction flashes upon every mind ; and the

truth of the recital and the justice of the judgment are felt and approved by all.

Then the scene closes. The multitudinous ranks on the right hand and on the left move off in solemn silence to their separate destinations, these to the regions of woe "prepared for the devil and his angels," those to the blissful realms of "life eternal."

#### 6. WHAT WILL BE THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT ?

It will be perfect righteousness—the righteousness which is prescribed by God's holy law. Nothing short of this will satisfy the claims of justice on the day of final reckoning; and therefore by this criterion all must be "judged, each one according to his works." (Rev. 20 : 12, 13.) "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12 : 14.) "Thine eyes are upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." (Jer. 32 : 19.) "God will render to every man according to his deeds . . . in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." (Rom. 2 : 6, 16.) "For every idle word that men shall speak they shall give account in the day of judgment." (Matt. 12 : 36.) In such passages the deeds and words are taken as fruits of faith, and therefore indices to the state of the heart. But the same criterion is applied directly to "the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. 4 : 12, 13.) "The Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts." (1 Chron. 28 : 9.) "The righteous God trieth the heart and reins." (Ps. 7 : 9.) "O Lord of

hosts, that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart." (Jer. 11 : 20). "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." (Jer. 17 : 10.) "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies" (Matt. 15 : 19); and therefore "the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16 : 7) in which are the true elements and germs of character, and the springs of all action. And thus it is that "the judgment of God will be according to truth" in deciding the final destiny of all men.

Who that has any proper knowledge of the history and present state of his heart, of what has passed there and what dwells there, but must tremble at the thought of being tried by such a standard, with his eternal interests suspended upon the issue? And if we get such a view of ourselves, dimmed as our moral vision is by sin and self-love, how must we appear to the omniscient eye of the holy God! "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." (1 John 3 : 20).

Nor can there be any concealment from that all-searching Eye. It will glance through every avenue and penetrate every secret chamber of the soul. It will flash along every private walk and secret passage of the life that was lived on earth, "and bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts." (1 Cor. 4 : 5.) "There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves." (Job 34 : 22.) "Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." ((Jer. 23 ; 24.)

"He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" (Ps. 94 : 9.) "He knoweth the secrets of the heart." (Ps. 44 : 21). "No thought can be withholden from him." (Job 42 : 2.) "All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. 4 : 13.) "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known." (Luke 12 : 2. See also Ps. 139.) And "know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Eccl. 11 : 9.)

This sacred rule of judgment is not arbitrarily or legislatively established. It proceeds necessarily from the perfect holiness of God. It is therefore irreversible. Every attribute of the divine nature is concerned in maintaining it, and would be dishonored by any deviation from it. Any change or relaxation of it would involve a change in God ! While God is God there can be no other standard of judgment. "God sitteth upon the throne of his holiness," and "his righteousness is an everlasting righteousness." (Ps. 47 : 8 ; 119 : 142.)

There is therefore no lowering of this standard, no relaxation of these claims of divine justice by the Gospel. They must be satisfied in all their infinitude : and as sin, in its nature and tendencies, is an infinite evil, they demand the eternal death of the transgressor. These claims are not relinquished in the covenant of grace. But they are fully met by the voluntary vicarious death of the Mediator, "who himself bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, should live to righteousness" (1 Pet. 2 : 24)—met, therefore, in behalf of those, and those only, who die to sin and live to righteousness through faith in Christ Jesus. All

others must meet, for themselves, the inexorable demands of justice in that day when "he shall judge the world in righteousness, and the people in his truth." (Ps. 96 : 13.)

Yet many allow themselves to be deluded by a system of doctrine at once shallow and impious, which exalts God's love and mercy at the expense, and to the dishonor, of every other attribute of his holy character, and which makes God not the justifier of the ungodly, but the justifier of ungodliness, and Christ not the friend of sinners, but the friend of sin. On no other ground can the course of justice be so arrested as to save the sinner in his sins. Such an exercise of mercy would make "Christ the minister of sin." (Gal. 2 : 17.) It would frustrate the whole plan of redemption. Instead of bringing salvation, it would subvert God's throne, and spread universal ruin. For the stability of God's government, as in the case of all government, and the consequent security of all his creatures, depends on the perfect administration of justice. Sin is the transgression of God's holy law ; and "every transgression and disobedience must receive just retribution" (Heb. 2 : 2), or the law fails, its divine Author is dishonored, and his government must prove a failure ; and anarchy, desolation, and ruin must spread through all his empire. The consequences are fearful to contemplate. Who could escape, who could be saved, from the universal ruin ! Mercy exercised thus to the subversion of justice would be no longer mercy. It would be weak indulgence ; it would be imbecility !

Hence, by the divine plan and purpose to meet our exigency, and as a manifestation of infinite love, "God

gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life." "Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9 : 26), and to make it possible for God to "be just, and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." (Rom. 3 : 26.) Hence, too, "he must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet." Every transgressor (and who is not ?) must comply with the conditions of salvation which are thus made consistent with strict justice, or meet the doom of eternal banishment from God into the regions of outer darkness. In this decisive significance, the judgment day will consummate Christ's mediatorial reign, when, having subdued all enemies, "he delivers up the kingdom to God the Father." (1 Cor. 15 : 24.)

Before that awful tribunal, in that all-searching presence, we must all stand and be tried for our eternal lives by this perfect criterion. Nothing will be left to our choice. Willing or unwilling, prepared or unprepared, "we must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," and "be judged in righteousness." Every one "must pass the solemn test," and meet the inexorable demands of the holy law which he has violated. "And how can man be just with God?" Thank God there is a sufficiency of righteousness provided in Christ Jesus, and made available to sinners, to meet this solemn emergency. What must have been the condition of our race if no such means of justification had been provided ! What must be the condition of those who do not avail themselves of this mode of justification ! !

How this view of the hopeless condition of sinners, as amenable to the bar of righteous judgment, magnifies the



grace of God in the plan of redemption ! The Son of God assumes the guilt, endures the penalty, and meets the demand of the law, in his infinite nature. "He takes the dying sinner's place." "He who knew no sin is made sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5 : 21.) Thus, "through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God." (Heb. 9 : 14.) That offering is infinitely efficacious to atone for sin ; and the benefit of this atonement is offered in the Gospel to every sinner on condition "of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." And thus is provided "a righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all that believe, being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. 3 : 22, 24.) With this righteousness, and this only, those who have sinned may stand acquitted and justified in that day when "God shall judge the world in righteousness."

Contemplating this divine scheme of grace with the final judgment-scene in view, we are ready to repeat the apostle's exclamation : "Oh, the depth of the riches, and wisdom, and knowledge of God ! How unsearchable are his judgments, and untraceable his ways !" (Rom. 11 : 33.) In the execution of this plan every divine attribute remains untarnished, while sinners are pardoned and saved.

To those who believe in Christ the day of judgment will be divested of its terrors. It will be solemn, but not terrible ; and it will introduce them into the realms of life and bliss eternal. For, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? God is he that justifies ;

who is he that condemns? Christ is he that died, rather than that is also risen, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us; who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. 8 : 33 seq.) The song of the redeemed will celebrate forever the wisdom and grace of God in their salvation; and God will "show, in the ages to come, the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward" his ransomed saints, "through Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2 : 7.)

7. WHAT WILL BE THE MANNER AND COURSE OF PROCEDURE?

What a contrast will be presented to the vain technicalities, the cumbrous, senseless pleadings, the cunning artifices, the grave trifling by which justice is legally mocked and often perverted in human tribunals! Forms even which are essential to the ascertainment of the truth and the right, in earthly courts, will find no place in those solemn proceedings. No witnesses will be called, no testimony needed. With unerring discrimination the omniscient Judge "shall separate them one from another as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats." Every deed, every word, every thought, every impression of example and influence, will be made manifest, not by testimony nor symbol, but in glaring reality, as each individual of the separating throng, with his character revealed by that glance of omniscient discrimination, moves to his place on the right hand or on the left. As Lange remarks, "the whole sequel of the judgment will be presented in this anticipatory act." No sheep will be found on the left hand, no goat on the right. Moved by a resistless impulse, every one will take

his place in the marshalled ranks of the righteous or the wicked. Silence, profound as the suspense of fate, will pervade the assembled hosts. Then will be heard the voice of the Judge, directed to those on either hand, consigning them to their eternal state. But any representation must fall short of the simple sublimity of our Lord's description in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew :

“ When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then will he sit on his throne of glory. And before him shall be gathered all the nations ; and he will divide them one from another as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And he will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

“ Then will the king say to those on the right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then will the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungering and fed thee, or thirsting and gave thee drink ? When saw we thee a stranger and took thee in, or naked and clothed thee ? When saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came to thee ? And the king will answer and say to them, Verily I say to you, inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it to me.

“ Then will he say also to those on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the fire which is eternal, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry, and ye gave me not to eat ; I was thirsty,

and ye gave me not to drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked, and ye clothed me not ; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then will they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungering, or thirsting, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to thee ? Then will he answer them, saying, Verily I say to you, inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.

“ And these shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

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## CHAPTER V.

THE FINAL STATE AND DWELLING-PLACE OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND OF THE WICKED : HEAVEN AND HELL.

### *Introductory Remarks.*

WE enter now upon the consideration of a subject of deeper concern to us than any other which we are ever called to contemplate—OUR FINAL, ETERNAL STATE. All previous conditions of our existence pertain to a determinate period of duration, and therefore have an end ; this stretches onward, without limit or succession, into the ages of ages. It is true that each grand cycle in the sublime revolutions of the ages is preparatory and formatory to its successor, and each succeeding condition of the race receives the impress of its predecessor : but all previous ages and conditions are subordinate and contributory to this one grand final state and consumma-

tion, in which characters and destinies will be fixed and unchangeable forever.

The view opens now, more directly, into the mysterious and awful panorama of eternity ; and we feel, more than ever, that we have no sure light upon the objects before us but that which is reflected from the pages of revelation. Future eternity doubtless will be, as past eternity has been, made up of successive *æons*, each marked by the accomplishment of some glorious purpose of Jehovah, including the progress and development of his intelligent creatures who prove loyal to his rule, and attended with ever-new displays of the glory of the Godhead. This seems to be implied in the very terms employed to designate future eternal duration : *Εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων*, *into the æons of æons*. We cannot suppose that these æons will move on in undistinguishable monotony. They will be distinguished as blessed and glorious stages of successive development ; for the law of progress will never become inoperative. (Eph. 2 : 7 ; 3 : 10). But neither the extent nor the limit of any of these periods, nor the particular purpose to be unfolded by it, is revealed.

This, however, we know, for it is revealed : The decisions of the final judgment will never be reversed. The division of the family of man into the two great classes, the righteous and the wicked, the separation which will take place at the bar and the state to which the voice of the Judge will consign them, will be distinctively perpetuated, while eternal ages roll on. Progress there will be, doubtless in both directions, but no change of distinctive character or state, or diversion from the consequent path of destiny. " He that is unjust will be

unjust still ; and he that is righteous will be righteous still ;" and the changeless character will manifest itself in upward or downward progress forever.

If we trace up the history of doctrine on the subject of the final states, examine the prevailing views of different ages and the teachings of different schools, in the light of the simple revelations of the New Testament, we cannot help feeling that no advance has been made in this department of biblical study since Justin Martyr, Origen, and other writers of an early Christian date. Indeed, we find more to approve, more that is legitimately drawn from inspired teaching, in the writings of some of the early Christian fathers than in the standard productions of any later period. The doctrine concerning the last things shared sadly in the general corruption of succeeding times. Heaven and hell were depicted in almost every shade of coloring, and made the subjects of fanciful theorizing, and free speculation, and priestly imposition. As we follow on, we meet with the oratorical representations of Cyprian and Tertullian, which, however intended, were by many of that age taken literally ; the dreamy vagaries of monks and anchorets ; the crafty inventions and decretals of popery ; the vain subtleties of the schoolmen ; the fantastical conceits of the mystics ; the gross, sensuous necromancies of Swedenborg, etc., etc., etc.

But among all the forms and phases of the doctrine, we find nothing more absurd and unsatisfactory to an intelligent inquirer than the unmeaning abstractions, the metaphysical inanities, the vague generalities, of modern times. And this applies very generally to the utterances of the pulpit, the religious periodicals, and the books of

our age. We meet with no direct or intelligible statement in regard to heaven or hell, or the future of the righteous or the wicked. As those subjects are commonly presented, it requires a high degree of spiritual discernment to perceive what is desirable in heaven or fearful in hell. Both are very generally represented as abstract conditions of being, or internal states of mind and heart often separate and distinct from place, or relations, or external circumstances. Or, if these concomitants are referred to, it is in some metaphorical or metaphysical sense. We are reminded that the sources of happiness are within us ; and therefore heaven and hell are simply states of mind. "Heaven," says a late writer, "consists more in spirit than in place, more in character than in condition." (Dr. J. P. Thompson, "Theol. of Christ," p. 221.) This treats both place and condition as matters of little or no consideration. A state of happiness independent of place or condition is hardly conceivable ! Quite similar is his representation of the state of the lost : "a state of mental anguish prefigured by physical emblems." Most of what Dr. Thompson has written on "the blessedness of the saints," "and future punishment," belongs to this same species of metaphysics. And this is a fair specimen of a large class of modern writing and preaching on this subject. Little do we meet with that is definite or intelligible. Modern literature on this subject is made up chiefly of rhetorical emptiness and transcendental nihilism.

The fashionable theology glides over this subject cautiously, treats it in a confused manner, and evidently seeks to avoid it. Few ministers venture to preach on

any topic relating specially to the final states. It is a common remark that little is revealed on the subject, that the allusions of Scripture are too mysterious and occult to justify any definite statement ; and we are often admonished, when we propose to " search the Scriptures" for light on the facts and conditions of the life to come, to beware of prying profanely into " the secret things which belong unto the Lord," or of intruding sacrilegiously upon grounds assigned to inviolable mysteries.

It would be strange indeed if a system of revelation from God to men were silent, or ambiguous, on the subject of man's final state. To reveal the worlds to come, to disclose the eternal consequences of piety and of sin, and thus make known, and induce men to pursue, the way of life and salvation, constitute the great end and design of revelation. Let us not give heed to those who represent the Christian revelation as doubtful or unintelligible on this subject. Neither let us be deterred from studying the sacred volume with this end in view. Rather let us pursue our inquiries more earnestly, faithfully, perseveringly, prayerfully, stimulated by a sense of their importance, and bearing in mind always that the profound thoughts of inspiration, even when conveyed in simple utterances, can be apprehended only by assiduous study with the promised help of the Holy Spirit, for which we are encouraged to pray.

We have seen that the conditions of disembodied spirits in Hades are incipient to their final state. The good are happy, the bad miserable, in a degree beyond any earthly lot, but far short of their final state. While divested of the body, they are not susceptible of perfect



felicity, and therefore not of the intensity of woe. God has made the body an essential part of our being, and therefore made it capable of immortality. Without it, the soul cannot fully exercise its powers, nor realize its aspirations. The resurrection of the body, and the restoration of our being by the reunion of soul and body, are therefore indispensable to the conditions of the final state, whether of enjoyment or of suffering : for in that state these conditions will be consummated in execution of the judgment of the great day.

### SECTION I.

#### THE REWARD OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

Let us call to mind the words of the Judge addressed to those on the right hand : " Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world," and then that closing announcement of their blissful destiny, " the righteous into life eternal ;" and let us inquire, in the light of revelation, in what the blessedness of the redeemed consists.

#### ETERNAL LIFE.

Observe, first, that the whole of this blessedness is comprised in that last brief utterance from the throne of judgment, " life eternal." So also Mark 10 : 30 ; John 3 : 15 ; 4 : 36 ; 6 : 54 ; 10 : 28 ; 12 : 25 ; 17 : 2 ; Acts 13 : 48 ; Rom. 2 : 7 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 12 ; Titus 1 : 2 ; and many other passages. The nature of life, in its full significancy, has been already considered. (See chap. I.) To life, as an active, animating principle, pertains every power and capacity of enjoyment. The perfect life of

any being is therefore the perfect normal action and condition of every power and capacity of enjoyment with which that being is endowed. But this is true happiness in any grade of being. Life in absolute perfection is absolute unlimited felicity, and exists only in God its primal Fountain. But life in free normal action, in any creature of God, signifies the highest degree of happiness of which its nature is susceptible. Hence, in beings of progress, if there be no adverse intervention, happiness will always keep pace with development. Whatever impedes this free action of life, and interrupts the concurrent enjoyment, is abnormal, and belongs to the category of death. Whatever conforms to it contributes to happiness.

And now, if to this essential nature of life there be added the idea expressed by "*eternal*," we have the highest possible conception of felicitous being. *Eternal*, *αἰώνιος* applied as here to the final state, means not only endlessness, but intensity. "Eternal life" means life of such a nature as will conform to the conditions of the eternal world in those æons of eternity which stretch onward beyond the judgment day, not only endless in duration, but refined, and elevated, and intensified, in every capacity, and facility, and element of heavenly beatitude—life expanded and ever expanding and embracing new, and more refined, and exalted degrees of felicity, forever and forever.

But now it must be obvious to every reflecting mind that the state of blessedness which proceeds from this principle of life, if it be of such a nature, cannot be independent of external conditions, and relations, and circumstances. True happiness consists, and must forever

consist, in the healthful and congenial action of the faculties and affections of the soul. But this necessarily includes the proper objects of those faculties and affections. The exercise of love requires an object of love. Pleasure from the sense of the beautiful, the grand, the sublime, implies the presence of objects of beauty, grandeur, sublimity. And so of every other passion and affection. And all these objects must be in suitable conditions and relations to subserve the purpose of happiness. All this is necessarily involved in that brief closing declaration of the Judge, "The righteous into life eternal."

THE WORLD TO COME NOT IDEAL, BUT REAL.

Let us not then for a moment entertain the notion that the final blessedness of the saints consists in beatific abstraction, and rapturous contemplation, and ideal delight. "The world to come whereof we speak" is not ideal, but real. It is not a world of shadows and enchantment, but a real, substantial existence. It is true that Christ's kingdom prepared to be the inheritance of the blessed belongs to a world of very different nature from this as regards its conditions and realities. Its objects, and sources, and media of fruition are not material or sensual. They are of a nature more exalted and refined than human speech, in any ordinary acceptance of its terms, can represent. Yet they are not less, but far more, real and substantial than any thing earthly. Doubtless they are analogous to things which occupy our senses in this world; otherwise we could form no conception of them. The imagery often employed is doubtless more than mere poetic or abstract imagery. The

earthly corresponds to, and represents, the heavenly reality, though the heavenly infinitely transcends ; and that which was made glorious on earth will have no glory on account of the glory that excels. (2 Cor. 3 : 10.)

The tabernacle and its furniture are represented as "patterns (*ὑποδείγματα*) of things in the heavens," the "holy places made with hands as figures of the true" (Heb. 9 : 23, 24) ; and Christ, in his heavenly priesthood, is styled "a minister of the holy places, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." (Heb. 8 : 2.) That the tabernacle might be a faithful representation of heavenly things, "Moses was admonished of God, See that thou make all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount." (Heb. 8 : 5.) A particular solution of the mysteries represented by the tabernacle is not necessary to our general purpose, if it were possible. But this sets forth the principle of similitude between earthly and heavenly things.

So then we have, in the objects of material sense and earthly enjoyment, "shadows and images of good things to come ;" but the substantial, eternal realities belong to a higher order of things. "The things that are not seen are eternal." And the capacity to enjoy them pertains to a more refined and holy constitution of being, to that "eternal life" which Christ will give to all those who believe on him (John 3 : 15 ; 10 : 20), and which will be forever approximating perfection in the heavenly state. To the children of God while here these are mere objects of faith, dimly perceived, yet yielding their most refined enjoyments ; but in the more perfect state of regenerate life hereafter they will be perceived, and possessed, and enjoyed, as substantial realities. The mere

worldling has no idea of these objects and sources of heavenly blessedness. He has never apprehended them by faith, and therefore they afford him no enjoyment here. Nor could he apprehend or enjoy them if he were admitted into the kingdom prepared for the saints, hereafter. Eternal life in the soul is indispensable to such enjoyment; and this begins with the new birth. It is expanded and perfected in the world to come; but the germ of that life to which pertains every faculty of heavenly discernment, every susceptibility of heavenly enjoyment, must be produced in the soul while in its earthly state. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." The unregenerate soul could find nothing congenial or enjoyable there, nothing adapted to its sensuous desires, appetites, and affections.

Let us now consider more definitely wherein the blessedness of the saints in their final state consists—still consulting the divine oracles and seeking to ascertain what is revealed.

#### I. THE PLACE OF THEIR ABODE.

"Inherit the kingdom prepared for you." More particularly described elsewhere, "Many will come from the east and west, and will recline with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of the heavens." (Matt. 8 : 11.) "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." (13 : 43.) "So shall be richly ministered to you the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1 : 11.) To his persecuted followers Jesus says, "Great is your reward in the heavens."

(Matt. 5 : 12 et al. passim.) See also Matt. 5 : 3, 10 ; 2 Tim. 4 : 18.

We learn then that Heaven will be their dwelling-place. There "they who have been called will receive the promise of the eternal inheritance." (Heb. 9 : 15 ; 1 Peter 1 : 4.) That Heaven is a *place*, a real definite locality, is plain from the uniform representation of the Scriptures,—“Look down from thy holy habitation, from heaven.” (Deut. 26 : 15.) “Hear thou in heaven, thy dwelling-place.” (1 Kings 8 : 30.) “Jehovah’s throne is in heaven.” (Psalms 11 : 4.) “Our Father who art in the heavens.” (Matt. 6 : 9.) “The angels of God in heaven.” (Matt. 22 : 30.) “In heaven, their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.” (18 : 10.) “Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” (6 : 20.) “Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repents.” (Luke 15 : 7.) “Ye have in heaven a better and enduring substance.” (Heb. 10 : 34.) Jesus said to his disconsolate disciples when he was about to leave them, “In my Father’s house are many mansions : but if not, I would have told you that I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I come again, and will receive you to myself, that where I am ye may be also.” (John 14 : 2, 3.) We know whither Jesus went. He ascended to heaven, and will from thence return. (Acts 1 : 9–11.) Passages containing such distinct local allusions to the heavenly world might be multiplied.

Now it will not do to reduce plain direct forms of speech like these to mere figure and allegory, nor to refer them to some indefinite placeless, or ubiquitous,

sphere of shadowy existence—a sphere without centre or circumference. Nothing, perhaps, has done more to undermine the authority of inspiration than such enigmatical interpretation of its language. Men may well despair of understanding writings in which words are employed so equivocally. We must distinguish between pictorial representation, often found in poetry and prophecy, and plain didactic or historical statement. There is no imagery in the passages just quoted. The expressions are simple, direct, evidently literal. Heaven is spoken of in such relations as necessarily designate a place distinct from other places. In the last especially—where our Lord speaks of his *Father's house*, of *mansions* or rooms in it, of *going*, preparing *a place* for his disciples, *coming again*, taking them to be with him *where he is*—we have circumstances and relations of place which cannot be allegorized nor spiritualized away without violence to the plainest principles of language. Says Dr. Lange: “Not in vain is it written, Our Father *in the heavens* (Matt. 6 : 9); Christ came down *from heaven* (John 3 : 13); ascended *into heaven*, (Acts 1 : 11); is set on the throne of the majesty *in the heavens* (Heb. 8 : 1); the inheritance of Christians is reserved for them *in the heavens*. (1 Peter 1 : 4.) Even if the throne of God be denominated the central point in the heavens, or the highest point above the heavens, still the heavens themselves are not excluded from being his house; for there is a distinction between the seat or throne in a house and the house itself.” (On John 14 : 2.) We are reminded of the “eternal habitations” (Luke 16 : 9), of the “building of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” (2 Cor. 5 : 1).

We find scattered through the Scriptures numerous allusions, direct or incidental, like these, to heaven or the heavens, as distinctly local a blessed world in which is the place of God's glorious throne and presence, in which angels dwell, and in which holy men and women redeemed by the blood of Christ will have their final eternal home. But we find more than bare general allusions to satisfy our inquiries and help our conceptions. There is much of direct statement and description in the writings of inspired seers who have been favored with visions of heaven and heavenly things. Mysteries of the world unseen and eternal were presented in vision to Isaiah (6 : 1-5), to Ezekiel (chaps. 1 and 10), to Daniel (7 : 9, 10), to Paul (2 Cor. 12 : 1-4), and to others. But to none other were they so fully and clearly revealed as to the rapt seer of Patmos, who, in the apocalyptic vision, "saw heaven opened," and was permitted to look in upon that holy, happy place, to see some of its sublime wonders, and witness the ineffable blessedness of its glorious inhabitants. It is remarkable how this vision of John corresponds with the others, taking in their principal objects, and combining all, as it were, in one artistic piece, thus casting a clear light upon what might otherwise be obscure. Compare, for instance, the throne and the Being who sat upon it, encircled by a rainbow and the appearance of precious stones, as seen by Isaiah and Ezekiel, and as seen by John. Compare the cherubim and seraphim described by them with the mighty angels whom John saw flying through heaven, and engaged in busy service and praise.

Attended by an angel sent by Jesus to guide and explain, John had a bright view of the heavenly world and



its sublime mysteries. The vision opens with the appearance of the glorious Being in the midst of the lamp-stands, who had in his hand seven stars, and whose countenance was as the sun shining in his strength. And then, as the grand panorama moves on, wonder after wonder is revealed, till the last impressive scene is unrolled : The holy city New Jerusalem, with its walls of precious stones, its gates of pearl, its streets of pure gold, as transparent glass ; with the throne of God and the Lamb in it surrounded by a rainbow like in appearance to an emerald, and the glory of God to lighten it ; the river of the water of life proceeding out of the throne ; and trees of life along the street and on either side of the river prolific in celestial fruits and healing leaves. But no epitome can do justice to the inspired description of a place so transcendently glorious. Read Rev. 21, 22, with the incidental descriptions in other passages, chap. 4 ; 7 : 9 seq. ; 15 : 2 seq.

But there is much more necessarily involved and implied in this description, and in other descriptive passages and allusions, than is expressly stated. All the objects mentioned have their necessary associations and connections. Trees, fountains, rivers, and their banks are objects necessarily associated with a landscape ; and a city with its walls, streets, and gates necessarily implies a surrounding country. It is not in the power of thought to separate these objects from these natural connections and dependencies. Doubtless the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews meant more than mere metaphor when he said of some of the heroes of faith, " But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country ; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God ;

for he has prepared for them a city." (11 : 16.) And this gives fitness and force to the idea of stranger and sojourner as applied to the children of God on earth, both in the Old and in the New Testament. (Lev. 25 : 23 ; Psalms 39 : 12 ; 1 Chron. 29 : 15 ; Heb. 11 : 13 ; 1 Peter 1 : 17 ; 2 : 11.) They are compared to the Israelites in their journeyings : they are roaming through a desert country. Heaven is represented as their land of promise, the country of their future inheritance, the place of their eternal Sabbath-rest, after their wanderings and sojournings are over. (Eph. 1 : 14 ; Col. 1 : 12 ; Heb. 9 : 15 ; 1 Peter 1 : 4 ; Heb. 4 : 9.)

Moreover, there are two passages in which heaven is represented as a Paradise, or rather as containing a Paradise. (2 Cor. 12 : 4 ; Rev. 2 : 7.) It is quite evident that this word is not applied to the same place in these passages as in Luke 23 : 43. There, as already shown, it designates that part of Hades which is assigned to the unbodied spirits of the pious dead. Here it denotes a place of superior bliss in heaven. Paul locates it in "the third heaven ;" and John calls it "the Paradise of God," wherein is the tree of life, of which he shall eat who finally overcomes. Many writers confound these uses of the term, and so involve the subject in confusion ; but Dr. Robinson (Lex. N. T.) admits this distinction clearly. Thus the term Paradise, as expressing the highest possible conception of the delightful in landscape, an assemblage and just combination of every thing that can lend a charm to scenery, is employed in adaptation to three states of being, to designate a region of supreme felicity. There is the terrestrial, the intermediate, and the celestial Paradise, each a scene of the

utmost blessedness possible in the state of being to which it pertains.

Now to treat Scriptures so distinctly and circumstantially descriptive as these are as mere imagery or symbolism, and subject them to ingenious allegorical or spiritualistic exegesis, is a violation of the plainest natural principles of interpretation, an outrage upon the common-sense of language. In the same way, and with as good reason, direct historical narrations may be reduced to allegory, and the Bible represented as a collection of fables and enigmas. Some have gone so far as this. There are some portions of the sacred Volume in which poetic or prophetic imagery prevails, but these are distinguishable, and must be distinguished from plain literal narrative and portrayal.

We have, then, in these Scripture accounts and representations an inspired clew to guide our present inquiries, and assist our apprehension of the nature of the blessedness of the heavenly state. As regards the place, heaven is a world of glorious realities feebly represented by things of earth. It is in the highest degree real, so far transcending all earthly reality that terrestrial when compared with celestial things are represented as mere shadows and vanities. Yet there is a similarity and correspondence between them, in fact and appearance : otherwise the earthly could not be employed to convey an idea of the heavenly. Our conceptions of the place are therefore aided by every charm of a delightful country through which we travel in the season of its brightest bloom and loveliness. As we journey on, landscape after landscapes opens before us, and spread its variegated scenery to our view. Along our way are green vales,

and vine-clad hills, and woody summits ; gentle slopes, precipitous elevations, towering heights, projecting cliffs; crystal streams, clear lakes and pools, bubbling fountains, rippling rills, leaping, foaming cascades ; smooth lawns, verdant fields, flowery meadows, and gardens bright with various beauty and filling the air with fragrance ; blooming orchards and shady groves vocal with the songs of birds. All may be heightened by fields of spices, groves of orange and palm and citron, and all the luxuriant charms of a tropical clime. Every sense is regaled, and pleasure flows through every channel to the soul. It will of course be understood that the celestial things with which these terrestrial objects are made to correspond are not real and literal in any such material sense as attaches to our conception of earthly objects, but real and literal nevertheless, and in a far higher sense, as appertaining to a system and order of things which is supernatural and eternal.

But, as a further help to our conceptions, there is set before us the most enchanting scene, an assemblage of the most enchanting scenes and lovely objects in nature—a PARADISE. Observe that a Paradise, in its original acceptation, is a park or garden, rather a park and garden combined. It is designed to be, as far as possible, a miniature collection of all things that are charming in nature and art. Among these improved pleasure grounds of wealth and royalty, found in greater or less perfection in every age and country, are the most delightful spots on earth. Nature and taste and culture and art are put in utmost requisition to produce the effect most conducive to perfect enjoyment. Some of the most elegant and interesting passages in the ancient classics

are descriptions of royal parks and gardens. Those, for instance, which were attached to the palaces of the Lydian and Persian monarchs, of which we find vivid accounts in Herodotus and Xenophon, and even those of some of the subordinate satraps, were evidently beautified and adorned beyond the power of description. The same may be said of the palatial gardens of the Hindoo rajahs, and of princes of modern times. Even fable and mythology borrow the brightest tints in their pictures of felicity from these scenes of terrestrial beauty and delight. The gardens of the gods embody their brightest ideal of the *sedes beatorum*, the place of perfect elysian blessedness.

But every such pictorial representation, whether painted with pen or pencil, in words or colors, falls far short of the charming original from which every element is borrowed. We must endeavor to conceive of an Oriental park and garden, in the most genial clime, beneath the loveliest skies, on earth ; the grounds selected with wise reference to variety of surface and soil, and susceptibility of ornamental culture and arrangement. All the powers of nature and skill of art are made tributary, as far as possible, to its decoration and embellishment. Its diversified surface is carved into romantic forms of symmetry and irregularity, planted with trees and interspersed with shrubs and plants of every species from every country and clime, intermingled with statuary and other works of art. As we follow some winding avenue, or circuitous pathway, we pass beneath stately trees, through shady groves luxuriant with vines, by beds and parterres of blooming flowers, along the verge of green hills and velvety terraces ; or, descending into a valley, we pass a

spring issuing from beneath a mossy rock and sending forth a rippling rill, and cross a rushing stream and wend our way along its bank. Now the view opens upon a smooth lawn, now into a long vista with clumps and thickets on either hand and terminated by an overhanging wood, now upon a rocky precipice with trails of pendent ivy. Now we hear the noise of a cascade, and now it merges into view, and we approach the foamy lakelet beneath and look out upon its miniature islands. Now we ascend an eminence and gaze on mountain peaks towering sublime in the distance, and look away on the broad expanse of ocean. Now we enter an arcade of luxuriant vines and hanging clusters, and flowery festoons, and now we emerge into an open area crossed and bordered by ravines and dotted with ornamental plants and shrubbery. On our way we pass through representative fields and groves of spices and orchards and plantations laden with delicious fruits. Crystal fountains with mossy seats and blooming lilies and roses, shady bowers melodious with songs of birds, flowery alcoves, delicious retreats, through all the grounds, invite to pleasure and repose, while strains of sweet music often proceed from grove or glen, and fragrance floats everywhere on the breeze.

But every possible description of such an assemblage of scenes and objects of enchantment must be tame when compared with the reality as witnessed in the Paradise of an Eastern prince in the palmy days of Oriental royalty. Every feature of beauty and grandeur and sublimity in terrestrial scenery, every charming object of nature or art, was represented in happy combination to please the senses and exhilarate the soul with pleasant

surprises and continuous delight. Such, in the highest possible degree, when imagination catches the suggestions of the sublimely brief description in the second chapter of Genesis (vers. 8-15), must be our conception of the Paradise in which God placed our first parents.

#### THE HEAVENLY COUNTRY AND PARADISE.

And now, in application, let it be observed again that these terrestrial scenes and objects are not presented in the Scriptures as mere types and symbols of heavenly felicity. They are not given as mere emblems of comfortable states of mind, and happy spiritual abstractions. They are employed to help our conceptions of the happy world unseen, and therefore to be taken as representative of substantial heavenly realities, corresponding objects and sources of delightful enjoyment in the future abode of the blessed. Otherwise they must fail of the purpose for which they are employed, and indeed of any definite purpose, as being susceptible of any fanciful interpretation.

But be it ever borne in mind that the scenes and things represented pertain to the heavenly world. They are "eternal and in the heavens." They are congenial in nature and adaptation to that blest world of perfection and glory. We must not confound them with material things, these mere objects of fleshly sense by which they are imperfectly represented. "The things that are seen are temporal; but the things that are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor. 4 : 18.) Thus we read of "fountains of living waters," of "the river of the water of life," of "trees of life bearing twelve kinds of fruit, and yielding their fruit monthly," of "the paradise of

God," of "the heavenly country," etc. But none of these must be thought of as temporal or material. They are celestial and eternal. The objects specified belong to the heavenly country, and must, from the nature of things and the constitution of mind, be associated with other essential objects and features of a lovely, and in this case a perfect, country, since we are contemplating a perfect world. They are therefore to be taken into view among "the things which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, which God hath prepared for those who love him." (1 Cor. 2 : 9.) They are all perfect in their nature, adapted to the perfect state, wisely designed to promote the felicity of beings of lofty intelligence and holy refinement. We must endeavor to rise in our conceptions above every thing sensuous or terrestrial. We must distinguish between earthly and heavenly things as we are taught to distinguish between the natural and the glorified bodies of the saints. Every thing pertaining to the place is glorious as the bodies are glorified. It is a celestial country, and every scene, and every thing, is celestial. The fountains, the rivers, the hills and vales, the fields and groves, the trees and plants, the leaves and flowers and fruits, every charm of every landscape, and every source of enjoyment—all are heavenly and eternal. The paradise is "the Paradise of God."

But these things are not less real and substantial, but far more so than terrestrial scenes and objects. This world, with all its objects of sense, and all that is material, is made up of shadowy representations of substantial realities in the heavens—shadows as compared with the substance. Yet, to answer the purpose of illustra-



tion for which these comparisons are employed, there must necessarily be a true resemblance between the things compared, so that a denizen of earth, familiar only with terrestrial things, would instantly, on beholding the corresponding celestial objects, recognize them in their true character and classification—a river, a tree, a flower, for instance, as a river, a tree, a flower; and so of other objects essential to a complete cosmical system.

#### THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

But, as an additional aid in forming an idea of the heavenly land, we read of a city there of inconceivable splendor and magnificence. It is represented as "*the* city which hath *the* foundations whose builder and maker is God"—that is, God, in a special sense, is the designer and builder of it. (Heb. 11 : 10.) It is called "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem" (Heb. 12 : 22), "the holy city New Jerusalem." (Rev. 21 : 2.) We readily perceive by such allusions and epithets, and by the terms chosen to describe it, that it is glorious beyond the utmost descriptive power of human language. As we read we are made to feel how inadequate are the words and phraseology of earthly speech to convey an idea of the celestial wonders present to the vision of the enraptured seer. Hence inspiration has to qualify our terms and forms of speech, and seems to labor for utterances suited in some degree to our apprehension—not from want of resemblance of earthly to heavenly things, but "because of the glory that excelleth" in the heavenly. As described in John's vision, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations," each one apparently a polished resplendent heavenly gem. The twelve gates were

twelve pearls, each several gate one pearl. The structure of its wall was jasper ; and the city was pure gold. The streets were paved with gold. But no earthly mine ever produced such gold ; it was transparent as glass. There was a throne set in heaven (chap. 4 : 2) encircled by a halo for which John could find no better name than a rainbow. But it was something different from the iris reflected from earthly clouds. The idea must be aided by another comparison : It was like in appearance to an emerald. And to convey some idea of the glorious Being who sat upon the throne, while the distinct impression is that his form is divinely human, he is described as “ like in appearance to a jasper and a sardine stone.” Around that radiant throne were twenty-four thrones, on which sat twenty-four white-robed elders wearing crowns of gold. Lightnings and voices and thunders issued from the throne. Seven lamps of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, burned before it. As it were a sea of glass like crystal (human speech could convey no better idea of it) was before the throne. Intelligent living beings, heavenly wonders, for which this world can furnish no names, were present engaged in ceaseless ascriptions of praise. Mysterious beings, living wonders, baffling description, intensely engaged in ready active service, are seen on every hand. The luminary which beams upon the city is like to a most precious stone, as it were a jasper stone emitting crystalline light (*κρυσταλλίζοντι*, Rev. 21 : 11) ; but this bright luminary is but an immediate reflection of the glory of God in which the whole city is enveloped ; for the throne of God and the Lamb is in it ; and the glory of God, the Source of all light, is the light of it. A pure river of

water of life [not *the*, but *a*, river, implying that there are other bright streams in that heavenly land], bright as crystal, issues from the throne, with trees of life bearing celestial fruit and foliage on its banks.

Every attentive reader must perceive that John, "in the spirit," selects the most expressive terms, employs the most significant phraseology, and puts language to its utmost task, to convey to us an idea of that world of wonders and glory into which he was permitted to look. Every part of the description is suggestive of more than the words, in their ordinary sense, express ; and we need the help of the same Spirit by which John wrote to elevate our conceptions when we read the glowing account of the heavenly vision. A holy, glorious place—glorious because holy ! The dwelling-place of holy, happy beings—happy because holy ! None other could be happy there ; and none other can ever enter there. " There shall, by no means, enter into it any thing polluting, or working abomination or falsehood ; but those only who are written in the Lamb's book of life."

On earth cities are objects of surpassing interest, presenting the costliest display and splendor. Wealth and power and art combine to make them magnificent. The perfect ideal of a city includes perfection in every work of nature and art, in every characteristic of personal refinement and social organization. Philosophers and sages and poets have exercised their genius in vain endeavors to conceive and describe such a state : it cannot be imagined. What adequate idea can we form, then, of the holy city New Jerusalem, in its heavenly perfection, the seat and centre of Jehovah's universal empire, the place in the heavens where he has set his throne !

But though we derive our best idea of it from John's vision, it is not a visionary idea : it is not the figurative representation of a mere shadowy state. Though its glories transcend our powers of thought, it is not a mere transcendental state of spiritual consciousness. It is all the more a substantial, eternal reality.

Before leaving this part of the subject it should be remarked that these local descriptions and allusions by no means convey the idea that the whole of heaven is within the walls of the city, or within the Paradise of God. Our thoughts are led upward to an inconceivably glorious world, of which this world, in its loveliest tracts and forms, is an imperfect miniature representation—but possessing sufficient resemblance, nevertheless, to mould our conceptions of that bright and blessed system of being. There perfection reigns. Every object is perfect in itself ; and the variety, the order, the arrangement, the adaptations and the relations, are absolutely perfect. The Paradise, the City, belong to that world of celestial perfection. They are represented as bright spots even in that bright world ; and to them the blessed inhabitants have free access. But they are circumscribed by walls and limits, and occupy definite localities in that universe of divine felicity.

Such a place is heaven as adumbrated to our feeble perceptions by the pencil of inspiration. Such, but, oh, how surpassingly more glorious than our powers of thought can reach ! Probably the revelation is as clear as could be made to our apprehension. Clear enough surely to kindle our holiest aspirations ! “ Let him that readeth understand.” But to understand, we must study, reflect, ponder, pray. It is a subject in which we

may make progress in knowledge, and obtain clearer and clearer views of what is revealed ; and the more our minds become illuminated by the Holy Spirit, the better shall we understand.

And now the blessedness of the saints will consist, in part, in possessing an inheritance, and dwelling securely and forever in that world of glory and joy. There the redeemed of the Lord, in answer to his affectionate prayer (John 17 : 24), will be with him, and behold his glory, and have full fruition of his love ; “ and his servants will serve him, and will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no night there ; and they will have no need of a lamp, nor of the light of the sun, because the Lord will give them light ; and they will reign forever and ever.”

## 2. THEIR ASSOCIATIONS AND RELATIONS.

Heaven is the dwelling-place of God. It is true God is everywhere ; but heaven is the world of his more immediate personal presence. There he manifests the glory of all his attributes through no intervening, obscuring media. In that bright world he has fixed his throne ; and there is the glorious triune presence, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, diffusing perfect and continuous light, and life, and joy. “ Jehovah’s throne is in heaven.” (Psalms 11 : 4.) There, too, dwell all holy beings of every rank and order of angelic nature. And there will dwell forever the redeemed of Adam’s race, welcomed to that world of bliss, and freely intermingling in that exalted society. Hence the inspired writer, addressing disciples on earth but looking forward to the final gospel triumph, and anticipating the time when “ Jesus shall gather to-

gether into one the children of God that are scattered abroad " through the ages and countries (John 11 : 52), says : " Ye have come to mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of first-born ones who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just ones made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." (Heb. 12 : 22.) What blessed associations are these !

The angels are uniformly spoken of as " of heaven," or " in heaven," or sent from heaven. We know nothing of them except what is revealed. But we know from revelation that they are beings of holy and exalted nature, serving God as his messengers and the executors of his will. We know they are of various ranks and grades of dignity and power and glory, cherubim and seraphim, principalities and powers and authorities. We know they take an interest in the affairs of men, and that they are specially interested in the work of redemption. They ministered to Jesus in the desert of his temptation, and comforted him in the hour of his agony, and rolled away the stone from the door of his sepulchre, and communicated intelligence of his resurrection. They bore the soul of Lazarus to Abraham's bosom. They rejoice when sinners repent and turn to the Lord. They minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They go forth, at Christ's coming, to gather the elect. They will be in attendance at the august scene of the final judgment as intensely interested spectators, and ready to execute the sentence of the Judge. And we know from distinct revelation that when the risen glorified throng of the redeemed, passing from the judgment scene, enter

the kingdom of their eternal inheritance and appear "before the throne clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands," "all the angels" will be there, "standing round the throne," to hail them welcome, and to join with loud Amen in ascriptions of praise to the Author of their salvation. The rapt seer of Patmos had a vivid view of that illustrious entry and reception. He says, "I saw and beheld a great multitude which no one could number, out of every nation, and all tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands. And they cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb. And all the angels were standing round the throne, and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Amen : the blessing, and the glory, and the wisdom, and the thanksgiving, and the honor, and the power, and the might, be to our God forever and ever, Amen. And one of the elders answered, saying to me, Those who are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence came they? And I said to him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they who came out of great affliction; and they washed their robes, and made white their robes, in the blood of the Lamb." (Rev. 7 : 9 seq.)

Thus all heaven rejoices when the ransomed of our race, the great company of the church triumphant, enter the heavenly courts. And this, in celestial bosoms, can be no mere transient, evanescent emotion of kindness. The cordial fellow-feeling manifested in this joyous welcome will govern all the subsequent intercourse of angels with saints. There will be no distinction of caste or de-

scent, no proud or humbling thought of rank or possession, of intellect or attainment, no spirit of pride or envy, to interrupt the relations, or disturb the harmony, or mar the enjoyment of happy beings there. If saints do not become angels, they "will be like them" (Mark 12 : 25) ; and saints and angels will mingle in perfect fellowship of spirit, and dwell together in harmonious participation of heavenly delights. Holiness will constitute the universal trait of congeniality, and perfect love the all-pervading bond of union. Saints and angels will be intimate companions in that glorious state.

There too, gathered into "the general assembly and church of first-born," will be the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, holy men and women, God's faithful servants of old, the saints of all time. All God's elect, without the loss of one, will be there. A blessed company saved by the blood of Christ and now partakers together of his glory. The Christian heart expands with sublime joy at the prospect of meeting, and holding free conversation, and enjoying sweet communion, with those ancient worthies and heroes of faith who are subjects of inspired record. And we shall really meet them there, and enjoy their society, if we love the God whom they loved. But there is no child of grace, of whatever age or country, and however humble and obscure he may have been in his earthly lot, in whose history and experience we shall not feel a deep interest. All will be there, with revived memories and reminiscences of their earthly pilgrimage, ready to tell of their joys and sorrows, hopes and fears, dangers and deliverances, and to join in praising the great Deliverer.

Here on earth we find our highest satisfaction in asso-



ciation with the people of God ; and we love to meet with those who bear traits of his image. But oh, how much is that image obscured in every case, and how often is it counterfeited ! And how imperfect is our spiritual discernment to distinguish a true child of grace ! And how many untoward influences there are to interrupt the confidence and the harmony of saints ! But there will be no such imperfections, nor misapprehensions, nor occasions of distrust or discord there. The divine image will be perfectly restored. It will be manifest in every feature and lineament and expression of every member of that heavenly family ; and, with refined spiritual senses and powers of perception, capable of discerning the traits of mind and heart, every one will know and be known, only to love and be loved. As children of God, brethren of Christ and in Christ all, the tie of kindred will be universal. Every one will be, and will feel and know that he is, an object of affectionate interest to every other one. Love, resting on perfect knowledge of character and disposition, will regulate all the intercourse ; and love among holy beings will of course be perfect in its nature. There will be no more place for charity, for there will be no faults or blemishes to cover. Heart will respond to heart, spirit will commune with spirit, in all the delightful interchange of holy love.

In these happy relations, saints who were associated in the toils and trials and conflicts and sufferings of this life will often sit together in some heavenly place to talk over the reminiscences of their earthly sojourn ; and it will be no small part of the felicity of the blessed thus to

compare their present with their former state, and speak of "the former things as passed away."

"Pilgrims in that vale of tears,  
Oft they knew, while there below,  
Gloomy doubts, distressing fears,  
Torturing pain and heavy woe.

"But those days of weeping o'er,  
Passed that scene of toil and pain,  
They shall feel distress no more,  
Never, never weep again.

"Every tear is wiped away,  
Sighs no more shall heave the breast,  
Night is lost in endless day,  
Sorrow in eternal rest."

#### RECOGNITIONS AND REMINISCENCES.

But will there be such remembrances of the former state, and such recognitions in heaven? Will kindred and friends know each other, and will they retain the memory of "the former things?" Strange that such a question should find place in the mind of any Bible-reader! To be associated with eminent saints, to "recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven," is represented as one grand source of enjoyment to the saved. But surely those saints must be known to make their society appreciated. And, for the same reason, a personal acquaintance with other "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" must enhance the felicity of heavenly intercourse. Those who are renowned for their faith in God, of all past generations—"a great cloud of witnesses"—are represented as interested spectators of our manner and progress in run-

ning the Christian course. Surely they do not look upon us as a motley, undistinguishable multitude of runners : they regard us as individuals, and mark the progress of each. Will they become oblivious of the victors, and meet them as strangers at the end of the race ? After all their solicitude, will those who have successfully reached the goal meet with no recognition when they enter among them with crowns and palms of victory ? It cannot be. They will meet with joyful recognition and cordial personal welcome to the society of the blessed in the mansions of rest.

And will then dear friends and kindred of the flesh lose, in the translation from earth to heaven, all remembrance of one another ? Away with such a thought ! In the disembodied state, as before shown, they know each other, and participate discriminately in the enjoyments provided there. It will not be less so when the just are made perfect in the heavenly state. " When this mortal shall put on immortality," when these bodies shall be revived, and soul and body reunited, the personal, cognizable identity, though in glorified form, will be restored. Indeed it will be more conspicuous than in this life : for, not only the external form and features, but also those distinguishing traits of mind and heart which constitute the character and disposition, and of which we have no direct cognizance here, will be clearly perceived there. And thus there will be more and clearer traits of the original personality. Yes, there will be recognitions, joyful recognitions in heaven. If we make our own calling and election sure, we shall know and be known " in that eternal world of joy." We shall meet and greet our sainted relatives and friends sepa-

rated from us by death and gone before us. Parents and children, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, lovers and friends, kindred of every tie and loved ones of every endearing relation in this life, will meet again, and dwell together forever in that happy sphere of being where no bond of the heart will evermore be sundered, and where the sweet communion of congenial spirits will never pall.

What may be the precise nature and conditions of these relations when renewed in glorified bodies and transferred to the heavenly state, we may not be able to know. But we do know they will become pure, holy, congenial to that exalted state, perfect in all the interchange of ministration and enjoyment, and therefore satisfying to every desire of the soul, and promotive of the utmost realization of felicity. Nor will such personal attachments and individual endearments interrupt the general harmony, or impede the current of universal love. Holy sympathy will flow from heart to heart; and every one's joys will be enhanced by witnessing the joys of every other.

There too, if by grace we are saved, we shall see Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, who loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, whom, not having seen, we love, and who, when about to leave the world and go to the Father, breathed that tender prayer, "Father, I will that those also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." There we shall behold him as "the first-born from the dead," still clad in a human body but transfigured and radiant with divine glory—"the glory which he had with the Father before the world was." (John 17 : 5.) There we shall dwell near

him, hold intimate communion with him, hear his voice, enjoy his smiles without any intervening veil. "We shall see him as he is," and be like him in all the divine uniformities and congenialities of a glorified nature. By the transforming power of his glorious presence in all the intercourse of heavenly love, "we shall be changed into the same image from glory to Glory," become more and more like him, while countless ages move on. (2 Cor. 3 : 18 ; Phil. 3 : 21 ; 1 John 3 : 2.)\*

Through him as "merciful and faithful High Priest," by his finished work of atonement, the heirs of salvation will also have access full and free to the Father, being "presented holy, blameless, before him in love." (Col.

\* I must append here a beautiful passage from Cyprian, which would be spoiled by translation, and which, if inserted in the page, would interrupt too much the train of thought to any one not familiar with Latin : *Quis non ad suos navigare festinans ventum prosperum cupidius optaret, ut velociter caros liceret amplecti ? Patriam nostram Paradisum computamus ; parentes Patriarchas habere jam cœpimus : quid non properamus et currimus, ut patriam nostram videre, ut parentes salutare, possimus ? Magnus illic nos carorum numerus expectat ; parentum, fratrum, filiorum frequens nos et copiosa turba desiderat, jam de sua immortalitate secura, et adhuc de nostra salute sollicita. Ad horum conspectum et complexum venire quanta et illis et nobis in commune letitia est ! Qualis illic celestium regnorum voluptas sine timore moriendi et cum æternitate vivendi ! quam summa et perpetua felicitas ! Illic apostolorum gloriosa chorus, illic prophetarum exultantium numerus, illic martyrum innumerable populus ob certaminis et passionis victoriam coronatus. . . . Ad hos, fratres delectissimi, avida cupiditate, properemus, et cum his cito esse, ut cito ad Christum venire contingat optemus. De Mortalitate, p. 166. In Hagenbach's Hist. Doct. vol. I., p. 226.*

1 : 22 ; Eph. 1 : 4.) For " Jesus, as forerunner for us, has entered within the vail, having become a High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek." And since, through riches of grace, " both he that sanctifies and they who are sanctified are all of one," he will not be ashamed to present them as brethren before his Father's face, " saying, Behold I and the children whom God gave me." At his death the vail of the temple—which covered " the holy places made with hands, figures of the true"—was rent in twain from top to bottom, in token of the free entrance then opened into the divine presence, by a new and living way, for all who come unto God by him. This blessed privilege of confident access to the Father will be perfected to all the household of faith, in their heavenly home. (See Heb. 2 : 11 ; 5 : 6 seq. ; 7 : 25 ; 9 : 24 ; 10 : 19 ; John 14 : 6.)

There too the animating presence of the Holy Spirit, like a divine atmosphere, will pervade all the celestial plains, and envelop all the blessed inhabitants, infusing fresh life and joyfulness by every breath, and inspiring every act and office and utterance of heavenly intercourse. And thus, in the full consummation of the plan of redemption, the proclamation of John, the gospel har-binger, will be fulfilled in the blissful experience of all who enter those realms of joy : " He shall immerse you in Holy Spirit." (Matt. 3 : 11.)

### 3. THEIR EMPLOYMENTS.

Heaven is often spoken of as the place of the saints' rest. Their condition there is compared to the rest, or settled state, of the people, of Israel in the land of their promised inheritance after their tedious wanderings

were over. Thus Paul, referring to the conquest and settlement under Joshua as but a partial fulfilment of the divine promise, infers : " There remaineth therefore a Sabbath-rest for the people of God"—thus embracing in the same comparison the rest of God after completing the work of creation.

The rest of heaven, therefore, is not a state of idleness or inaction. That would be a heritage of infelicity, and insignificance, to beings of active nature like ours. Our happiness, our development, our progress as regards every true aim and purpose of our being, depend on action. Israel did not rest in idle repose ; they rested from the weariness and precariousness of their nomadic life and wanderings in a desert land and from the war of conquest, rested in settled homes, though in active pursuits and employments. God has not been idle since the work of creation, nor are his energies limited to creative acts. He upholds, guides, moves, regulates, controls all things. Jesus said, " My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." (John 5 : 17.)

The saints will rest from the toils and cares, the dangers and conflicts, the troubles and trials, the sorrows and sufferings, of their earthly pilgrimage. There will be no more wearisome labor or irksome duties to perform, no more misdirected or unavailing efforts, no more doubt or disappointment or failure of results, to dishearten or disquiet them. But they will not be divested of their active nature, nor deprived of motives and facilities for its exercise. They will not merely live in dreamy consciousness, without aim or purpose, and subsist in happy dulness and indolent contentment. They will find pleasing, useful, congenial employment, with noble ends

in view, grand objects to accomplish, to stimulate their energies and inspire their zeal : and successful results, in which God will be glorified and all will rejoice together, will always be sure. And thus they will rest in the delightful normal exercise of every active power.

When John, in his sublime vision of things to come, was invited to look in upon the world of the blessed, he witnessed a scene of incessant and intense activity. None were idle. The four-and-twenty elders, and the four wonderful living beings before the throne, were engaged incessantly in acts of worship and praise. Angels were busy executing the will of him who sat upon the throne, or doing him homage—proclaiming as heralds ; holding the four winds ; sealing the servants of God ; sounding the trumpets ; offering incense with the prayers of the saints ; descending to close the course of time ; flying in mid-heaven on appointed missions ; pouring the bowls of wrath ; reaping the harvest of the earth ; Michael and his angels fighting with the dragon and his angels ; all the armies in heaven following him whose name is the Word of God ; the dragon vanquished, and an angel binding him in the abyss—while all the host of heaven were intent on those sublime transactions, ready to perform any part assigned them, and manifesting their interest as purpose after purpose was unfolded in loud hallelujahs and ascriptions of praise to God and the Lamb.

Such, in its nature and general purpose, will be the employment of the saints in heaven. It will be serving God, executing his commands, doing his will, fulfilling his purposes, with perfect heart. Whatever the duty or occupation, it will be service rendered to God from pure



love to him, and with a perfect intuition of what is pleasing in his sight. Such service will be perfectly congenial with our renovated nature. It will bring into happy exercise every power and faculty of mind and body, every emotion, passion, and affection of the soul. It will delight every sense and satisfy every desire. All this will be secured by the fact that the service will be rendered to God, and acceptable to him. For, in that glorified, holy state, God's redeemed people will be so completely transformed into his image and likeness that whatever is pleasing to him will be pleasing to them ; and, in whatever service is assigned them, they will move by unity of purpose and impulse, and in unity of joy, with him whom they serve. Thus they will "enter into the joy of their Lord," and find such happy employment as will be precisely adapted to holy, heavenly natures, and in all its pleasing variety yield constant joy and delight. In these harmonious relations to God, "his servants will serve him, and they will reign with him forever"—at once servants and kings.

#### HEAVENLY WORSHIP.

The precise modes and forms of employment in that exalted state must of course transcend our conceptions ; but in regard to its general nature much is, directly or by necessary inference, revealed. Prominent among those heavenly employments, and intermingled with them all, are *acts of worship*. These are engaged in with a pure fervor of spirit, and in celestial modes of adoration, of which we have in this life but very inadequate experience. Nevertheless, our worship here, though so imperfect in all its acts, is of like nature with the perfect wor-

ship there, and representative of it. But here the vail of flesh separates us from the object of our worship : there, the worshipper enters within the vail, into the full glories of God's immediate presence in the holy of holies. Very eminently in what pertains to worship, things on earth are " patterns of things in the heavens," and " the holy places made with hands are figures of the true." (Heb. 9 : 23, 24.) Good things to come in the perfect state are represented by shadows under the law, and by more substantial images under the Gospel ; but the divine realities, " the heavenly things themselves," pertain solely to the heavenly state, and are enjoyed only by the blessed. (Heb. 10 : 1.)

*They sing.* But they mingle with angelic choirs, and join in heavenly anthems now. With voices attuned to heavenly harmonies, they sing to harps of gold. They give utterance to their joys in songs of deliverance, thanksgiving and triumph such as, in this world, none ever heard or knew. And one song, new even in heaven, they sing, " Thou art worthy, because thou wast slain, and didst redeem us to God by thy blood," etc.; while the angels catch the theme and respond, " Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and the riches, and wisdom and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing ;" and the sound of celestial harpers harping with their harps swells and prolongs the loud refrain. (Rev. 5 : 9 seq. ; 14 : 2 seq.) When music as heard on earth can so entrance the soul, what must be its power to charm when flowing in strains of holy devotion in heaven !

*They praise and give thanks.* The empyrean concave often rings with their hallelujahs and thanksgivings and

amens, while with loud voice they ascribe salvation to God and the Lamb, and adore him who sits upon the throne for his holiness, and wisdom, and dominion, and glory, and might. (Rev. 7 : 10 ; 15 : 3, 4 ; 19 : 1 seq.)

Do they not, or will they not, *pray*? Will prayer ever cease? Will the children of God ever become so independent as to want nothing more from him? Will he not always be the fountain of all blessing, "the giver of every good giving and perfect gift?" Will the time ever come when "we shall no longer need a throne of grace?" Presumptuous thought! Let it not be entertained. What pious soul would be willing ever to be debarred the privilege of going to God, as a child to a parent, to ask for what he wants? To say that the redeemed will have no wants is to say that they will be incapable of enjoyment. They will feel no more the pains of want. But the happiness of their state will consist not in having no wants, but in having every want supplied, and every desire satisfied. The answer to prayer will be certain; and faith will take its perfect form, "full assurance." Neither faith nor prayer will cease, but both will be perfected and rise to their highest exercise. Prayer is the medium of communion with God. We draw near to him in prayer, and talk with him of all our wants and all our state, and thank him for all his gifts. We shall always need such communion with him. The mode and manner of prayer may be changed when we have access full and free into God's immediate presence. It may be sometimes but the conscious thought, "the soul's sincere desire unuttered," before him who looketh on the heart. Or it may be the free outflow of the spirit expressed in the perfect language and attitudes

of heavenly being. But the voices and the language which are employed in singing and praise may be employed also in prayer ; and, doubtless, not only the thought but the voice of prayer and thanksgiving will pervade the assemblies of heavenly worshippers. Surely it will always be more pleasing to a devout spirit to ask and receive from God than to obtain, if it were possible, in any other way. As long as God has a purpose to accomplish, there will be happy occasion for his people to labor and pray—their prayers a fragrant incense to him, their labors delightful and always blessed.

And will there not be some form of oral instruction and address analogous to our sermons and lectures ? Dr. Watts, and some others, have held the affirmative opinion ; and they derive, from the incidental allusions of Scripture, from the analogies of being, and from the manifest conditions of intellectual and moral progress, the more than probable suggestion that the redeemed will enjoy the privilege of listening thus to instruction from angels of exalted rank and attainment, or even of sitting under the voice of the Son of God. This is a just inference from the passages in Hebrews last quoted. (9 : 23, 24 ; 10 : 1.) Divine worship and service, as prescribed for the disciples of Christ under the Gospel, is an image, a pattern, a copy, of the perfect worship and service of the church triumphant in heaven. It is consistent, too, with God's revealed purpose of the eternal growth in grace, and progress in knowledge, of his ransomed children, from the state of comparative ignorance in which they will enter heaven. (Eph. 2 : 6, 7 ; 3 : 10-19 ; 4 : 15, 16 ; 2 Peter 3 : 18.) Whatever may be their attainments here, they will enter a new world with new condi-

tions and relations and unexplored spheres of knowledge. And that the wise instruct the ignorant, that those who possess communicate to those who possess not, seems evidently to be God's universal, changeless law for the transmission of wisdom and knowledge, and the advancement of all his intelligent creatures. It is confirmed also by the fact in point that John, in his vision of heaven, was favored with angelic attendants to show and explain the mysteries which he saw.

Doubtless also, in their heavenly assemblies, the saints will find frequent occasion to recall and recount the toils and temptations, the privations and perils, the sorrows and sufferings of their earthly probation ; and they will experience, in comparison with their now blissful state, a glow of inspiration which will be transfused into their songs of thanksgiving for deliverance and salvation.

Better than all, in those congregations of the redeemed there will be such manifestations of the divine presence as no one in the flesh has ever conceived of. Those heavenly worshippers will be blessed with the real personal presence of that glorious triune Being to whom we are accustomed to address our doxologies. " They will see the king in his beauty." (Isa. 33 : 17.) " They will see his face," and behold his unvailed glory, and bow before him with rapturous adoration and praise. Glorious worship, blessed worshippers ! (John 17 : 24 ; Matt. 5 : 8 ; 1 John 3 : 2 ; Rev. 22 : 3, 4.)

But worship and its attendant exercises will not be the constant employment of the glorified saints, as some seem to suppose. They will not spend eternity in singing and praising, and falling before the throne. Delightful as such acts will be, in their place and degree, they might,

without change or relief, become monotonous in the long lapse of ages. Another happy employment will be

#### THE PURSUIT OF KNOWLEDGE.

It is not to be supposed that the saints, on entering heaven, will come into immediate possession of all knowledge, nor that they will acquire it by simple intuition there. That can never be true of any created being : if it were, he would be equal, in the attitude of knowledge, to God himself. He would be at once, or by an act of his will, omniscient. Doubtless the means and facilities of intellectual acquisition, both as regards mind and method, will be vastly increased. The difficulties to be encountered in the pathway of science here will be removed. The burdens and embarrassments experienced in the fortunes of this life will no longer check the aspirations, or weigh down the energies of the soul ; but knowledge will be available to all.

The mind, acting no longer through material organs of sense, but assuming actual spiritual communication with external things, will experience, in the exercise of its powers, a freedom and quickness and acuteness of perception, and a grasp of thought, known only to celestial natures. Nevertheless, the acquisition of knowledge, however easy and rapid, will be by a process of gradual reception. In a stricter sense than under any dispensation of God to men in this world, whatever the intermediate agency employed, " they will all be taught of God." (John 6 : 45 ; Isa. 54 : 13.)

The subjects of knowledge will still be *the works and ways of God*. These, in their infinite variety and wisdom, will always engage the inquiries, and the studies,

and the wonder of all intelligent creatures. The servants of God have always found pious delight in contemplating his works and ways. The Psalmist speaks often of "the wondrous works of God" as a theme of sublime and endless praise. "The works of Jehovah are great, sought out by all them that have pleasure therein." (Psalms 111 : 2.) "The glory of Jehovah shall endure forever ; Jehovah shall rejoice in his works." (Psalms 104 : 31.) "All thy works shall praise thee, O Jehovah ; and thy saints shall bless thee." (Psalms 145 : 11.) "Jehovah is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." (Psalms 145 : 17.) Nature and providence, therefore, through all his vast domain, will furnish fit elements of growth in knowledge forever. "His ways are everlasting." (Hab. 3 : 6.) And though "his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out" (Rom. 11 : 33), though "such knowledge is too wonderful for us, so high that we can never fully attain unto it" (Psalms 139 : 6), so as to become perfect in it, yet the redeemed will enjoy the blessed privilege of pursuing it, and making new attainments in it forever and ever. And while eternal ages roll on, in every successive step of progress in divine knowledge, and as discovery after discovery is made in the immense unknown, they will raise anew the exultant song, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy ways, thou King of the saints !" (Rev. 15 : 3.)

When we consider that, to all beings of intelligent progress, happiness is dependent as much at least on acquisition as on possession, it is joyful to reflect that the range of knowledge will be boundless. The whole universe of space, duration, and being will be open for ex-

ploration and inquiry. New spheres of investigation, unexplored fields of existence, worlds innumerable with their unknown conditions and forms of life, throughout the illimitable expanse of God's empire, will invite to study and research. There will be enough to learn forever. God alone possesses, and no other being ever will possess, all knowledge. To beings who are conscious of imperfection in knowledge and development, as all God's intelligent creatures must be, whatever their attainments, acquisition and progress will always be essential elements of happiness ; and they are therefore provided for abundantly.

But if the works and ways of God are still to be the grand subjects of knowledge, we have a clew to the subordinate branches which will be cultivated and applied. The *works* of God include matter, mind, and spirit, in all their created forms, and normal conditions and manifestations, all that God created and made. And the *ways* of God comprehend all his modes of action, and methods of procedure, in all his infinite relations to the universe which he guides and governs : this of course includes all his providential arrangements and direction, and, as a matter of particular interest, all his dealings with his intelligent moral creatures. But we have here the subjects of all true science, only expanded over broader fields. The works and ways of God comprehend universal knowledge ; and to make successful progress in it will require the cultivation and practical application of all our sciences, and others doubtless of which we can have no conception through the gross material organs of sense. To enkindle that lofty spirit of devotion which animates the heavenly worshippers from the contempla-



tion of Jehovah's works and ways must require more than mere superficial observation, or an ignorant gazing upon them. It must require such a knowledge of them as will discover the wisdom, and power, and goodness, and righteousness, and truth of God, the glory of all the divine attributes as displayed in the works of creation and the ways of providence, thus constantly leading intelligent thought "through nature up to nature's God." Nothing short of this would be worthy of such an exalted plane of worship. But such discoveries can be made only by means of an acquaintance with the principles and laws which regulate and control matter and mind in all their conditions, relations, combinations, forms, motions, and order. Whatever pertains to matter, mind, or spirit, or to life and being in any form, from an atom to a system of worlds, from an insect to the loftiest angel, displays the glory of God, and is therefore calculated to increase the ardor of intelligent devotion—but only in the degree to which it is understood.

As regards the *works* of God, therefore, such a contemplation of them as essentially becomes those who have been elevated to that exalted plane of being fitly represented by the sea of glass mingled with fire, and as is indicated by their praises and devotions, must require the cultivation and application of every science which can contribute to the knowledge of matter, mind, or spirit, in any mode of existence. To such knowledge, natural, mental, and moral science, physics and metaphysics, in all their branches, must be ever and increasingly necessary as the circle of observation is enlarged and the subjects of investigation are multiplied. And this must bring into constant requisition the principles of

the pure abstract sciences, mathematics, chemistry, logic, æsthetics, ontology, etc.—all in perfection of statement, demonstration, and application. Philology, from its intimate relation to mental phenomena and development, to the history of races, to the progress of civilization and religion, to the whole study of man, must retain an important place. Uranography and astronomy will assume more practical importance, and be prosecuted with ever-new facilities and ever-increasing interest, as wider views are opened out into the boundless expanse filled with the mighty Maker's works, worlds and systems and constellations innumerable, wheeling through immensity in their stupendous orbits. Probably every one of those objects of sublime contemplation and wonder which are at any time within the range of vision, numerous and distant as they are, will become accessible to the saints in light; and it will be a source of happiness to them, as the circle of their horizon expands and takes in orb after orb, system after system, to reflect that any one, or all, of these may yet, during the revolutions of ages, be visited and explored by them. It is not to be supposed that these bright celestial objects are hung out to the view of any of God's intelligent creatures merely to excite their wonder and provoke their inquiry, but forever elude their researches and remain shrouded in mystery.

And as regards the *ways* of God, such a contemplation of them as those lofty devotions, in minds of heavenly intelligence, imply must forever be fed and sustained by the discovery and elucidation of facts and principles in his moral administration as involved in his providential dealings with his intelligent creatures. This will require the study of history, biography, ethics, anthropology, and

theology. And thus dark providences and mysterious events in human affairs and fortunes, now inexplicable, will all be cleared up and made plain. And to give unlimited scope to these studies, so as to enlarge forever our conceptions of the glory of the divine attributes, the moral conditions and relations and historical career of the orders of being above us, as well as our own race, will be brought within the range of our researches. As in the case of God's mysterious works, it is not to be supposed that orders of angelic nature are dimly revealed to our view simply to excite our wonder, and then leave us in an attitude of hopeless inquiry. We shall learn more of them. And thus every life of every moral being will contribute to this treasury of divine knowledge, to which the saints will have access forever.

Thus it appears that the very praises of heaven, as well as the essential laws of intelligent being, imply the pursuit of knowledge by means of every science which relates to nature, to man, to angel, or to God in all their innumerable relations. And doubtless there will be other sciences, and other uses of science, in a state of being so far above and beyond all our conceptions of which we can form no idea.

Since knowledge will not be intuitive, but always a subject of acquisition, there must be modes and methods of communicating and receiving it. There must be teachers and learners. Moreover, the happiness derived from knowledge consists largely in acquiring and imparting it. All analogies bearing on this point go to show that some will instruct others. Of this we may be certain: the means of attainment will be adapted perfectly to that felicitous state, and to those glorified minds, so as to

satisfy all their aspirations and yield them constant delight.

## VOCATIONS.

Since heaven is a WORLD, a κόσμος, in the fullest sense, a perfect system of order, relations, and adaptations, it is a natural, and seems to be a necessary, inference that there will be regular occupations or *vocations* there. The working of such a system will not surely be left to mere mechanical automatism, or to individual caprice or spontaneity, without rule or regulation : though all will yield spontaneous compliance, and feel that the good of one is the good of all. It will be regulated and arranged by perfect intelligence, and therefore in perfect adaptation to the nature of intelligent creatures, so as to furnish congenial and profitable exercise to all their active powers according to their various talents and attainments. It must be essential, alike to the public and private weal, and therefore to the perfection of the system, that there be distinct and various spheres of employment analogous to vocations in human society. If the earth in its original state was so adapted to man that the primitive Paradise could furnish various happy employment "in dressing and keeping it," may we not infer that the heavenly world, prepared for the glorified saints, will furnish employment equally congenial to their nature and conducive to their felicity ? If our first parents found delight in cultivating the flowers and fruits of Eden, will not the saints above find greater delight in cultivating the flowers and fruits which are indigenous to the Paradise of God ? But we have no direct revelation on this point ; and, whatever our reasonings and analogies may teach us to infer, they cannot lift our thoughts so high as the

heavenly realities. Doubtless those holy, heavenly natures find occupation in definite and distinct spheres of happy, useful activity.

Thus every power finds sweet employ,  
In that eternal world of joy.

Other blessed employment will be found in

#### THE SPECIALLY APPOINTED SERVICE OF GOD.

God will not cease to employ subordinate agencies, and work by means. So long as he has any purposes to accomplish he will require the services of his creatures to convey his commands and messages, and to execute his will. In this service angels of every order are employed, as the very name (*ἄγγελος*, *messenger*), as well as the offices in which they are revealed to us, indicate. They are his messengers and ministers to whom, for the execution of his purposes, the elements are often subjected, for "he maketh his angels winds and his ministers a flame of fire." (Heb. 1 : 7 ; Psalms 104 : 4.)

But the race of man has, and always will have, an important part to act in this service. God endowed man with noble powers. He conferred on him the rational and moral nature by which he is fitted instrumentally to be at the head of this creation, and regulate and guide it in the fulfilment of its destiny. "He made him a little lower than the angels, crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of his hands." (Psalms 8 : 5 ; Heb. 2 : 7.) But it is absurd to suppose that an order of beings so highly endowed is appointed to a mere term of service which will close with this transient life. There is a place assigned to man which no other being can ever fill in the all-wise Maker's plan ; and his ser-

vices will always be required. Glorified saints will be employed in the missions and ministrations of heaven. "His servants" of Adam's race "will serve him" still. In this, as in other blessed relations and privileges, they will "be as the angels of God." (Matt. 22 : 30.) Moses and Elijah were sent on a mission to the Saviour when he was about to finish the work of redemption on the cross. They "appeared in glory, and talked with him, and spoke of his departure which he was about to fulfil in Jerusalem." (Luke 9 : 30, 31.) And why should not the saints, on such appointed missions, visit other worlds as well as this? It seems to be a just inference from this recorded fact, and consistent with all we learn from revelation, as well as with the important place assigned to man in the chain of being, that they should visit remote worlds and systems as ministers and messengers of God intrusted with his commands. On such heavenly errands, as well as in the pursuit of knowledge, they may pursue their course from world to world along the bright path of the galaxy, direct their way from constellation to constellation, range through sidereal space exploring its radiant orbs, its mysterious nebulae, and sublime wonders. Such illustrious service will be congenial with the glorified nature and holy aspirations of the redeemed. This has been referred to already.

#### THE BENEVOLENT AFFECTIONS WILL FIND EXERCISE.

It may be added under this head that all the benevolent affections, all the finer, kindlier, tenderer feelings of our nature will find their proper employment in that state of perfect relations and felicitous activity. These yield our sweetest enjoyments even here, cumbered as

they are with the imperfections of the flesh ; how much more in their perfect exercise there ! It is true there will be no such objects of benevolence as interest us here. There will be no suffering to relieve, no sorrow to soothe, no tears to wipe away, no objects of pity to commiserate, no victims of vice to reclaim, no heathen to evangelize. But these best affections of the soul will not become obsolete or inert : they will realize their truest, purest, holiest exercise. The pleasure experienced in acts of benevolence consists not in sympathy with the sufferers, but in the consciousness of kind efforts to do them good, and in witnessing the comfort of those who are relieved. Our sympathetic nature is not gratified by scenes of sadness, but by scenes of gladness. Our sweetest enjoyments consist in the interchange of kind words and offices with those we love, though no sorrow be assuaged, no want supplied, and in witnessing and participating in their enjoyments. And how will the joy of that intercourse be enhanced in that world of blessed relations where the bond of affection, running from heart to heart, will be universal, and where all will participate together in unalloyed fruition ! Nor will it interrupt the joyful harmony of that heavenly intercourse if there be special attachments, and corresponding relations of kindred spirits any more than the natural ties of kindred, affection, and congeniality interfere with the common bonds of society on earth. Those common bonds of fellow-feeling are strengthened by these more intimate ties.

#### 4. THEIR REFINED SENSES.

It cannot be supposed that the body will come up from the grave, having put on immortality, with the same

gross organs of sense and powers of perception which formed the soul's connection with the outer material world, and which are so imperfect both as avenues of knowledge and means of enjoyment. In the glorified body all the senses will of course participate in the glorious transformation. They will be refined, and perfected, and adapted to the new conditions of being, and this must apply to their range, acuteness, and precision. They will be fitted to serve the immortal spirit as unerring channels of beauty, excellence, and truth. And for this purpose it is more than probable other senses besides those we now possess will be added, suited to the perception of spiritual objects and relations, and completing the connection with that perfect world. This is necessarily involved in the change of state. Probably what we now contemplate as ideas and abstractions, mental and moral conceptions, may thus become distinct objects of sense, and perhaps even the primary essential nature, the quiddity, of things.

Thus the redeemed spirit, restored to its rightful control and normal action through perfect media, dwelling amid scenes and objects of celestial beauty, grandeur, and sublimity in the world of glory, having free access to every object of desire, will experience in the exercise of its powers and sensibilities a constant sense of exquisite delight. And thus the saints will be prepared to enjoy

##### 5. THE BEATIFIC VISION OF GOD.

They will have access into his most immediate presence. They will stand before his throne and serve him in his temple: he will *dwell* among them. (Rev. 7 : 15.) They will nevermore pray, " lift thou the light



of thy countenance upon us," for he will cause his face, beaming with love, ever to shine upon them with unveiled glory. And they will experience in this beatific vision of God, and real intimate communion with him, an elevation of thought, an exaltation of spirit, a rapture of joy which transcend all our powers of imagination. Human eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor language described, nor thought conceived, nor could our mortal frame endure, the glory of that heavenly presence. But the glorified saints will be prepared, body, soul, and spirit, to enter thus into the full joy of their Lord. For though

" His glories shine with beams so bright  
No mortal eye could bear the sight,  
Yet where his love resolves to bless,  
His truth confirms and seals the grace."

Nor is it necessary to suppose, with Augustine, that they will be elevated above the region of sense, and this vision of God will be intuitive. If they have bodies they will have organs serving as media of intercommunication with external objects. The resurrection bodies of the saints, fitted, as we have seen they will be (p. 112), to the nature and action of the predominant *πνεῦμα*, or spirit-life, will be endowed with an organism refined and exalted, so as to meet all the demands and conditions of their blessed state, and be unfailing media of heavenly beatitude. In that new-created organism the redeemed will approach into the open presence of God. The prohibition consequent upon sin will be removed. (Ex. 33 : 20.) They will "see his face and live," live in the highest sense of life, drink from the fountain of life, live in all the intensity of rapturous joy which such access to God must inspire. They will realize such a perfection of life

as the Psalmist anticipated when he said, "Thou wilt show me the path of life : in thy presence is fulness of joy ; at thy right hand are pleasures forevermore." (Psalms 16 : 11.)

#### 6. HAPPY CONSCIOUSNESS OF THEIR STATE.

From considerations such as the following :

A conscious assurance of *entire freedom from sin*, both as to its dominion and consequences, death and every ill included. So complete will be their deliverance from their former frailty and exposure to temptation that they *cannot* any longer sin. Augustine considered this a principal element in the felicity of the blessed. And this inability to sin he justly regarded as the only true liberty. Sin is bondage ; perfect holiness is true liberty. He says: *Primum liberum arbitrium, quod homini datum est quando primum creatus est rectus, potuit non peccare, sed potuit et peccare; hoc autem novissimum eo potentius erit quo peccare non poterit. Verum hoc quoque Dei munere, non suae possibilitate naturae. Deus natura peccare non potest ; particeps vero Dei ab illo accepit, ut peccare non possit.* "The first free-will" which was bestowed on man when he was first created upright, had power not to sin, but had power also to sin ; but this last will be so much the more powerful in that it will not have power to sin. But this also by the gift of God, not by a power of its own nature. God, by nature, cannot sin ; but a companion of God receives it from him that he cannot sin." And so he writes with regard to immortality : *Sicut enim prima immortalitas fuit, quam peccando Adam perdidit, posse non mori, novissima erit non posse mori.* "As the first immortality, which by sinning

Adam lost, consisted in being able not to die, the last will consist in not being able to die." (Hagenbach, Hist. Doct. vol. i. pp. 377-8.)

An assured feeling of such complete deliverance from sin and death must form a happy contrast with the experience of their former state, in which they "could not cease from sin," being all the while "drawn away and enticed," and "through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." (Heb. 2 : 15.) It is the strongest desire of the Christian heart to be cleansed from the pollution, and freed from the besetments of sin. He feels deeply that it is offensive to God, whom most of all he loves, and least of all therefore he would be willing to offend. The remains of a sinful nature within him fill him with pain, and often cause him to groan in spirit, and say with the apostle, "O wretched man that I am ! Who will deliver me from the body of this death ?" (Rom. 7 : 24.) In that world of blessedness he will find the deliverance for which he so often sighs ; and he will feel constantly and exultantly to "thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Body, soul, and spirit will be made holy ; and the love of holiness will govern every desire, and passion, and emotion, and impulse. And since where there is no sin there can be no death, the ransomed saints will triumph in the fulfilment of "the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory !"

An assured sense of *the favor of God* will be another cause of joy unspeakable. There will be in those heavenly bosoms a constant assurance of his love. No more doubts, no more fears, no more trembling hopes of acceptance with him, no more sense of shortcoming or unworthiness to diminish the holy boldness, or abate the

joyful freedom of communion with him. There will be nevermore such questionings as, "Am I a subject of his grace? Am I his, or am I not?" Faith will take the form of full assurance; hope will be exceeded in fruition; and the whole conscious nature of every saint will be all aglow with a sense of divine love.

Again, they will enjoy a sense of *perfect security*. There will be no evils to fear, no dangers to guard against, no precariousness of state or possessions to create alarm, no emergencies to provide for. "Sickness and sorrow, pain and death, will be neither felt nor feared any more." The rich treasures laid up in heaven will be forever secure. "Neither moth nor rust will corrupt, nor thieves break through and steal." "The wicked will cease from troubling." There will be no enemies to harm or invade the peaceful subjects of that happy realm. The great Captain of their salvation will have achieved a complete victory and "put all enemies under his feet" in their behalf; and all his faithful followers will share in his conquest and his triumph, and enjoy the safety and peacefulness of the kingdom prepared for them as an eternal inheritance. This suggests that

They will enjoy also a blessed consciousness of *peace*—"heavenly peace which passes knowledge." (Augustine.) There will be no cause of molestation within or without. "The peace of Christ will rule in every heart" (Col. 3 : 15), reducing all the passions and desires and affections of the soul to harmony with each other, and thus regulating all relations and maintaining universal harmony. There will be peace within from a sense of peace with God and with all his creatures. No malevo-

lent feeling will ruffle any breast ; no injurious act will disturb any relations. " The peace of God which surpasses all understanding " will flow as a river, and fill every soul with joy and gladness. (Phil. 4 : 7 ; Isa. 48 : 18.)

Again, they will be blessed with a delightful sense of *home*. Home is the dearest spot on earth, the scene of our purest enjoyments. But oh, how precarious are all its pleasures and endearments in such a world as this ! How few, comparatively, are favored with a genuine home ! The greater part of mankind are wanderers, sojourners, tenants at will. And this is the lot of God's dear children as well as others. But even at best an earthly home fails to satisfy the innate longing of the soul. The Creator has placed within us aspirations which conform to a nobler, happier destiny. Those who are " made heirs of God according to the hope of eternal life " are sensible of this, and cheerfully acquiesce in the thought that they have here " no certain dwelling-place," nor perfect objects of affection, while they look upward with joyful anticipations to their future heavenly home. And these hopes will not be disappointed when Christ shall take his elect to himself, when they shall receive their inheritance in his everlasting kingdom and dwell in the blest mansions prepared for them. Kings' palaces are but temporary, comfortless booths compared with the " everlasting habitations " into which they will be received ; and the sweetest domestic enjoyments are scarcely a foretaste of the blessedness of those heavenly connections and associations amid which they will dwell. There will be no precariousness, or imperfection attendant upon that blissful home. In it the feeble earthly

Foretaste will be exchanged for complete fruition. The soul's indefinite longing will be satisfied, its ideal realized. Home with God, with loved ones, among kindred spirits loving and beloved, and in the midst of all things lovely—what more could be desired?

Finally, there will be to them the joyful reflection that this state of felicity will be *perpetuated*, and that as the powers of action are increased, and the capacities of enjoyment enlarged, every power will still find employ, and every capacity will be filled. There will be no more failure of powers, capacities, or facilities of action or enjoyment. There will be no more deterioration, no decrepitude, senility, decline, or decay, but perpetual bloom and vigor of celestial youthfulness. There will be no exhaustion of the sources of life and knowledge, nor any thing to hinder free access to them forever. There will be no deficiency of the means of development, nor waning of the powers of acquisition. There will be no time lost in recuperating spent energies. There will be no adverse limitations of time, opportunity, fortune, or space. There will be no want of noble objects of effort and enterprise.

The glorified saints may look forward to eternal ages of progress and blessedness; they may look abroad in space and feel that there is no limit set to the range of their explorations and their discoveries; and they may look within and feel that they have faculties to be forever developing, capacities to be forever expanding; and that therefore they are destined to approximate forever, though they can never attain, the perfections of God. Every one of the redeemed, on entering heaven, will be happy to the full measure of his capacity; every desire

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will be satisfied, and his joy will be full: and ever onward through the revolutions of the eternal ages, as the circumference of his knowledge expands, and the faculties and attributes of his being are unfolded and strengthened, he will receive corresponding accessions of pure heavenly enjoyment. And thus there will be perfect felicity, fulness of joy, for all, forevermore.

#### CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS.

Thus have we endeavored, in the light of divine revelation, to lift our eyes and raise our thoughts to heaven, and contemplate the blessedness of the saints above. But oh, how inadequate are all our symbols of thought to convey ideas of heavenly things ! We seek in vain for words and forms of speech suited to express even the ideas which are suggested, and formed in the mind, on this subject from the study of God's word. We are compelled to employ the names which belong to objects of material sense, and to use terms which relate almost exclusively to this temporal state. We feel their imperfection ; but there are no other available to us while in the flesh : and even when we arrive at a knowledge of " the things which are freely given us of God," we cannot convey it " in the taught words of men's wisdom," nor can we, by such media, distinctly " compare spiritual things with spiritual." It is pleasing to anticipate, as a part of the blessed state, a perfect medium of refined spiritual thought. Inspiration employs these earthly symbols in bold tropes and impressive figures to help our apprehension. Doubtless in this way all is communicated that we are capable of knowing : for the imperfection we feel belongs not solely to our vehicles of thought, but

to our present state. But the revelation which God has given us is couched in suggestive forms of utterance, and representative imagery, which comprehend more than can be verbally expressed, and which can be understood in their high import only by assiduous, earnest, prayerful study. And when we have done our utmost, oh, how imperfect are our conceptions of a world so glorious, a state of being so exalted ! How far short of the sublime reality ! How far does the blessedness of the saints in the world of their final abode transcend all the elysian dreams of imagination, all our powers of thought ! We become more and more sensible of this as we study the Word of God on this subject. As our view extends, new glimpses of glories beyond continually break in upon our rapt vision, and we are often lost in the contemplation. "Such knowledge," like God's omnipresence, "is too wonderful for us ; we cannot attain unto it" until we are released from the fetters of mortality.

Heaven is a world of ineffable glory and felicity. It is not made up of mere conditions and abstractions and phantasms. It is not imaginary, nor ethereal, nor even spiritual in the ordinary ghostly sense. It is a glorious WORLD—a real, substantial, cosmical system, in comparison with which this world and all things that pertain to it sink into mere shadows. From that blessed world of eternal realities the saints will look back upon their former state and see, as they never saw before, what poor shadowy representations of the true heavenly objects of the soul's desires are all the pleasures and possessions and honors of this vain world of sunbeams and shadows. All the felicity and glory of that world of perfection is comprised in the state of "life eternal" into



which the ransomed of the Lord shall enter when they are dismissed from the judgment throne. For the enjoyment of such a life of bliss God, in his own wisdom and grace, prepared for them his heavenly kingdom "from the foundation of the world." (Matt. 25 : 34, 46.)

Oh, is not such a place and state worth seeking at any earthly cost? What sufficient estimate can be set upon an inheritance in that world of eternal beatitude? Is it not a sufficient reward for any possible labor or service? Will it not compensate for any self-denial, privation, toil, or sacrifice required to secure it? Oh, the folly and perverseness of those who refuse it! How infinite their loss! Paul had an inspired sense of the richness of this "prize of the heavenly calling;" and no wonder he was willing to forego every worldly advantage, and give up every earthly possession, and "count all things loss," to gain it. But it is offered on terms which make it available to all: "If thou wilt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. 10 : 9.) And all this blessedness of the heavenly state is comprehended in the salvation of the Gospel which is offered on these easy conditions. Faith in Christ overcomes the world; and "he that overcometh shall inherit all things." (1 John 5 : 5; Rev. 21 : 7.)

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But it is sadly true that there are many who persistently "neglect so great salvation," and "count themselves unworthy of eternal life." "They despise the pleasant land; they believe not his word." (Psalms 106 : 24.) They are heedless of eternal issues, and pre-

fer "the pleasures of sin for a season." (Heb. 11 : 25. "That will come upon them which is spoken in the prophets, Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." (Acts 13 : 41.) "Life and good, death and evil are set before them," and they choose the way of death. (Deut. 30 : 15.) To such the words of Jesus, spoken in sadness, will apply : "Ye shall die in your sin : whither I go ye cannot come." (John 8 : 21.) They will come forth from their graves "to the resurrection of damnation" (John 5 : 29), and will find their place, in the great day of doom, on the left hand of the Judge, whence "they shall go away into eternal punishment." (Matt. 25 : 46.) This will lead us to consider

## SECTION II.

## THE PUNISHMENT OF THE WICKED.

Let us turn our thoughts again to the solemn scene of the Judgment, and recall the words of the Judge in deciding the destiny of those on the left hand : "Depart from me, ye cursed, into the fire which is eternal, which was prepared for the devil and his angels." The Greek is *εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον*, the article repeated after the substantive with the attributive, to denote a contrast with other objects of the same kind. (Kuhner's Gr. Gram. 148, 9a.) Thus the fire spoken of is contrasted by the attributives with any other kind of fire. In the common rendering the force of this contrast is lost. There will be occasion to refer to this again. (See pp. 302, 303.)

The omission here of the phrase, "of my Father," used in the address to the blessed (ver. 34), is noticeable.

as indicative of God's merciful disposition. "He is gracious and merciful." He is the "Father of mercies." "He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked." "He would not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (Psalms 103 : 8 ; 2 Cor. 1 : 3 ; Ezek. 18 : 23 ; 2 Peter 3 : 9.) But this omission is sometimes made a point, as it would seem, in mitigation of the punishment of the wicked, or in apology for God in the execution of his justice. (Schaff et al. in Lange's Com. in loco., foot-note.) In this sense the criticism is shallow. It has no force either doctrinally or practically. The wicked, it is true, incur the curse by their own fault and neglect. It is consequent upon their own perverse and wilful violation of the manifest laws of their nature, a code "written in their hearts," and supplemented wherever the Gospel is made known by the offer of justification by faith in Christ. But consequences do not proceed fortuitously. They are governed by established laws. In the case before us it is God's holy law, the necessary expression of his essential nature, that governs ; and every penalty attached to the transgression of it proceeds from him as necessarily as does the code itself. It is the curse of God therefore which falls upon the wicked in the judgment, even if we regard it in no more direct sense than a mere consequence. So the Scriptures represent the evils consequent upon sin. "The curse of Jehovah is in the house of the wicked." (Prov. 3 : 33.) "He shall bring upon them their own iniquity, and shall cut them off in their own wickedness : yea, Jehovah shall cut them off." (Psalms 94 : 23.) "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and a burning tempest—the portion of their cup !" (Psalms

11 : 6.) "Jehovah will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire shall devour them." (Psalms 21 : 9.) "To me belongeth vengeance. I will recompense, saith the Lord." (Heb. 10 : 30.) It is the judgment of God that is executed, whatever subordinate agencies may be employed in the execution. But, moreover, the last words of the Judge, "these shall go away into eternal punishment," mean more than blind, passive sequence. They are not declaratory, but mandatory. They denounce "the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience" in their final doom. (Eph. 5 : 6 ; Col. 3 : 6.) It will be just and holy wrath upon those who have "despised the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering," and so unfitted themselves for any other destination. It is this feature of retribution, namely, that mercy exhausted will give place to wrath, which makes the doom of the lost most dreadful.

The doom of those on the left exhibits a fearful contrast with the blessed destiny of those on the right. Every utterance of the Judge, in pronouncing the sentence of the wicked, presents an appalling antithesis to the final lot of the righteous. Come ye blessed : depart ye cursed. Those are admitted to the inheritance of the kingdom prepared for them : these are consigned to a place of banishment and eternal fire prepared not for them, but for the devil and his angels. Those enter the world of eternal life : these go away into the regions of

#### ETERNAL DEATH.

We have seen (p. 222) that "eternal life," in the true inspired sense, comprehends the whole of the blessedness of the saved. Let it be observed now that the antithetic

scriptural idea, *eternal death*, comprises the whole of the wretchedness of the lost. It is true these precise words are not used ; but we have their full equivalent in the expression "eternal punishment," as explained by the parallel clause, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into eternal fire prepared," &c. It must be remembered that death, in its completeness, is not an extinction of being, but an unmitigated condition of miserable being. (See p. 40.) Banishment from God, the source of all life, and consignment to eternal punishment in the place of "the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels," "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"—*this is death*. It is the dark reverse of life. It transmutes every good into the opposite evil, every blessing into the contrary curse.

In this sense the Holy Scriptures speak of death as the ultimate consequence of sin, and apply it to the final doom of the ungodly. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." "As righteousness tendeth to life, so he that pursueth evil pursueth it to his death." (Prov. 11 : 19.) John calls this "the second death," with reference to the first exercise of the power of death upon mankind, which separates soul and body, and terminates our present state of existence. By that work of death the body is consigned to corruption, the soul to Hades, both to await the resurrection. That consequence of sin is the inevitable lot of all our race ; and that is all that death can do to us in our state of flesh and blood. If he exercise any further power upon us, it must be in our future indissoluble and eternal state after the resurrection change. A state of deliverance and perfect security

from any such further exercise of the power of death is the scriptural idea of immortality. This happy deliverance is provided for the faithful in Christ who, trusting in him, "by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory, and honor, and immortality." (Rom. 2 : 7.) "On such the second death will have no power." (Rev. 20 : 6.) Eternal life will be their reward. But no such deliverance will come to the finally impenitent. They choose the way of death ; and to be given over to his power, and bear his relentless inflictions forever, will be their irreversible doom. The resurrection will only prepare them to endure such a fate. "To those who are contentious and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath ; tribulation and distress upon every soul of man that works evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Greek !" Such is the death which awaits incorrigible sinners, who, "after their hardness and impenitent heart, treasure up for themselves wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." (Rom. 2 : 5 seq.) This conforms to John's definition of the ultimate nature of death as given in the words of him who sat upon the throne : "The fearful, and unbelieving, and defiled with abominations, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all the liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is second death." (Rev. 21 : 8 ; 20 : 14, 15 ; see also 20 : 6 and 2 : 11.)

But let us inquire more definitely into the nature of this state of death. In what will the punishment of the wicked consist ? It is of the utmost importance that we ascertain what is revealed in the Word of God on this subject.

## THE FEARFUL DOOM "DEPART."

That first brief utterance of doom to those on the left, "Depart from me," is of fearful import. Considered alone, it consigns them to unmitigated woe. From whom must they depart? From God, the great Source and radiant Centre of all possible happiness, the sole Fountain of all life and light and joy, from whom as the glorious Zenith of all perfection, "The Father of the lights, all good giving, and every perfect gift descends." (James 1 : 17.) "In his presence there is fulness of joy"—and nowhere else. Separation from him cuts off all the possibilities of enjoyment. Every step of departure from him is an advance into the dreary regions of darkness and death-shade. When "the wicked are thus driven away in their wickedness" they will be banished from the only source of consolation or hope. Departing from God, they enter the dreary domain of death and despair whither no cheering ray will ever follow them.

Moreover, it is God, in the person of Christ the Mediator, who pronounces the sentence of banishment. The Son of God in his glorified humanity will sit as Judge, he who for the salvation of sinners "took the form of a servant, and became in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself [yet more], becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." How must it aggravate their despair as they are driven away to think of this merciful condescension, and to remember the grace of God which they have slighted! He who now, speaking from the judgment-throne, says, "Depart from me," once said, in tones of winning tenderness, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." He who now consigns them to eternal ruin

once offered them eternal salvation. He will intercede for them no more. Their day of grace is past. The door of mercy is closed against them forever. They must depart from him in whom alone there is salvation.

But whither must they depart? What is the place of their exile? Into the region of "the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels;" into the realm of death, the place prepared for those who sinned and left their first estate in heaven. Thus must all the enemies of God go to the same place, and share a common doom.

Similar descriptive allusions to the place and state of final punishment are found in other passages scattered through the New Testament, such as these: "The fire unquenchable," in which, when the harvest of the earth shall be gathered, and God "shall thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor, and gather his wheat into the garner, he will burn the chaff." (Matt. 3 : 12.) The baptism or immersion in fire, to which Christ as Judge will consign the impenitent when the gospel day is ended. (Matt. 3 : 11.) [See Lange in loco., who says, "This interpretation has been propounded by many of the Fathers, and among modern expositors by Kuinöel, Schott, Neander, de Wette, Meyer." It is no doubt the true interpretation.] "The furnace of fire," into which "the wicked, all who cause offence and those who do iniquity, will be cast; there will be the wailing and the gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13 : 42, 50.) The place of "outer darkness," into which the intruder "without the wedding garment" at the marriage of the king's son, and also "the unprofitable servant," who had hid his lord's money, were ordered to be cast, and where also



"will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 22 : 13 ; 25 : 30.) The place where "those who know not God, and those who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall meet the demand of justice, eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord; and the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1 : 9.) The region of "the blackness of darkness which is reserved forever for ungodly men" who, under pious pretences, "turn the grace of God into wantonness and deny the only Master, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4 : 13.) The scene of the final "perdition of ungodly men." (2 Peter 3 : 7 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 9.) Finally, the region of woe which is the object of all these allusions is more distinctly and vividly imaged to our view by "the lake of fire and brimstone," into which "that old serpent which is the devil and Satan" will be finally cast. (Rev. 20 : 10.) And in this second state of death, this lake of fire, all unpardoned sinners, all who are "not found written in the book of life," will receive their eternal doom. (Rev. 20 : 14, 15.) All these passages, as their contexts plainly show, relate to that same place of punishment to which those on the left hand are doomed by the sentence of the Judge. It was not originally prepared for men, but for an order of beings who sinned without a tempter, whose bold, deliberate rebellion against God placed them beyond the possibility of redemption, and for whom therefore God had no purpose of mercy. It was "prepared for the devil and his angels." But sinners of Adam's race who persistently shut their eyes to the light of nature, and "changing the truth of God into a lie worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator," and especially those who neglect the offer of salvation made

in the Gospel, will be finally given over to judicial hardness and impenitency, and become like those fiends of darkness, and be their fit associates in that place of wretchedness and despair.

#### THE NAME OF THE PLACE OF PUNISHMENT, GEHENNA.

The following passages, which are identically and additionally descriptive, add also the name by which the Word of inspiration has designated the place of punishment. "Whoever shall say to his brother, Thou fool [an epithet of condemnation traceable to malice in the heart] shall be liable to the hell of the fire." (Matt. 5 : 22). "If thine eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out and cast it from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life with one eye than, having two eyes, to be cast into the hell of the fire" (Matt. 18 : 9—*εἰς τὴν γέενναν* *τῶν πυρρός*, in both of these passages.) Note that in this last passage "the hell of fire" is made the antithesis of "life;" it is therefore equivalent to death; and the state of infliction referred to is coextensive in duration with the state of life spoken of in the antithetic clause—that is, it is eternal. So also Mark 9 : 47, adding, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." But here, instead of "life" we find "kingdom of God" as the antithetic idea. Dwelling in that kingdom is therefore a state of life, to be cast into the hell of fire a state of death. "If thy right eye, or right hand, cause thee to offend, pluck it out, or cut it off, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members perish, and not thy whole body be cast into hell, *εἰς γέεννα*. (Matt. 5 : 29, 30.) So Mark 9 : 43, 45, adding, "into the fire that is unquenchable; where their

worm dies not and the fire is not quenched." Varied a little in Matt. 18 : 8 : " Better for thee to enter into life lame or maimed than, having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the fire which is eternal," *εἰς τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον*. " Ye make him [the obsequious, insincere proselyte] twofold more the child of hell (*υἱὸν γεέννης*) than yourselves." (Matt. 23 : 15.) " Serpents ! Generation of vipers ! How can ye escape the judgment of hell ?"—*τῆς κρίσεως τῆς γεέννης*, " the sentence which condemns to hell." (Lange. Matt. 23 : 33.) " Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," *ἐν γεέννῃ*. (Matt. 10 : 28 ; Luke 12 : 5.)

These Scriptures are singularly illustrative and explanatory of each other. Their coincidence is the more remarkable from the fact that the allusions to the state of woe are all incidental. There is no direct account, no formal statement. The future punishment of the wicked, and the place of punishment, are spoken of as facts well known and understood. There is enough in these passages, taken together, to make all plain and clear ; and no formal statement or description could be more evidential of the nature and certainty of the doom of the impenitent.

In all these passages the word rendered *hell* is *Γέεννα*, *Gehenna*. This is the word adopted by the Author of inspiration to designate the place of " fire prepared for the devil and his angels" where condemned sinners must take up their final abode. There is no other proper name applied to it in the Holy Scriptures—except in Isaiah 30 : 33, where *Tophet*, or *Topheth*, seems quite evidently so applied, in a secondary sense. It is well known that the later Jews employed this term

as well as *Gehenna* in this sense. But the two words, as proper names, were of similar origin and import : *Gehenna* was the name of a valley east or south-east of Jerusalem, defiled by the pious kings for its Moloch-worship, and *Tophet* was the place in that valley where those abominable rites were practised. *Sheol* and *Hades*, as already shown, never denote the place of final punishment. (See p. 71 seq.) They always, in Scripture use, denote the place of unbodied souls. Neither is *Gehenna* ever applied to "the place of punishment in Hades," as Robinson defines. (Lex. N. T. art. *γέεννα*.) Neither is it "i. q. *Tάρταρος*," as he also defines. *Tartarus*, as we have already seen (p. 67), is the name of that gloomy part of Hades in which wicked spirits pass their intermediate state. The place of final banishment and punishment of the wicked is often designated by a descriptive phrase or epithet, as *ἡ λίμνη τοῦ πυρός*, "*the lake of the fire*," and as in the passages already quoted ; but the only distinctive name ever applied to it in the sacred writings is *Gehenna*, or its near equivalent *Tophet* in the passage last cited : "For Tophet is ordained of old ; yea, for the king it is prepared ; he hath made it deep and large : the pile thereof is fire and much wood ; the breath of Jehovah, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it." Whatever temporal judgments upon a wicked king, the representative of a wicked nation, are here symbolically threatened, there is no doubt a view forward to the more literal fulfilment in the state of final retribution.

Besides this, such passages as the following show that the ancient prophets and worshippers of Jehovah were not ignorant of the last state of the ungodly. "He [the

wicked] shall be driven from light into darkness, and chased out of the world." (Bildad in Job 18 : 18.) "Upon the wicked he shall rain fire and brimstone and burning tempest ; the portion of their cup." (Psalms 11 : 6.) "Thou shalt make them as a fiery furnace in the time of thine anger ; Jehovah will swallow them up in his wrath, and fire will devour them." (Psalms 21 : 9.) "For there is a day of vengeance to Jehovah, a year of recompenses for the cause of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. Day and night it shall not be quenched ; the smoke thereof shall go up forever." (Isa. 34 : 8 seq.) "Ye shall conceive chaff ; ye shall bring forth stubble : your breath as fire shall devour you. And the people shall be as the burnings of lime ; as thorns cut up shall they be burned in the fire. . . . The sinners in Zion are afraid ; trembling has seized the impious. Who of us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? Who of us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?" (Isa. 33 : 11 seq.) "The evangelical prophet" concludes his predictions with a vivid portrayal of the last things, referring first to "the new heavens and the new earth," and the happy condition of the redeemed ; and then to the wretched state of impenitent transgressors as follows : "And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me ; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched ; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." (Isa. 66 : 24.) These very words were employed by Jesus in describing the state of those cast into the Gehenna of fire. The figure is taken from the valley of Hinnom, where from

the brow of Zion and Moriah the accumulated pollution of the city and the fires of Tophet might be seen. It is not represented as a scene of delight, but of horror to the spectators.

It is true, several of these predictions relate primarily to temporal judgments upon wicked nations, and in that sense have had a fearful fulfilment. But such utterances as these cannot be exhaustively fulfilled in the events of time. They comprehend more. They reach forward and foreshadow the final eternal retribution which will come upon the ungodly of every nation, tribe, and people, when God shall render unto every man according to his deeds. Read these Scriptures with their contexts.

But an argument against a place and state of future punishment is gravely drawn from the admitted fact that *Γέεννα* is simply the Greek way of writing גֵּי הֶיְנוֹם, which was the Hebrew name of a valley south-east from Jerusalem, where the offal of the city was thrown out, and where formerly the worship of Moloch, and other abominable idolatries, were practised. Thus an attempt is made to escape the conclusion to which the passages quoted above from the New Testament inevitably lead. And to give some plausibility to the argument, it is asserted that fires were kept continually burning in that valley : but of this there is no historical evidence whatever.

It is indeed true that *Γέεννα* originally denoted the valley of Hinnom, and that it was a place of abominations ; and there were frequent burnings there, both in the heathen rites and to consume the accumulating refuse.

It is also true that *παράδεισος*, *paradise*, means primarily a terrestrial park-and-garden, a place of exquisite beauty and delight. This argument has therefore the same appositeness and force to prove that *παράδεισος* is not used to designate a place of future happiness, that it has to prove that *Γέεννα* does not designate a place of future torment. It is, moreover, true that the words *שמים*, and *οὐρανός*, *heaven*, meant originally *the sky*, the apparent vault overhead, which was represented as a solid metallic hemisphere resting on the verge of the earth, and in which the stars were fixed. If therefore this argument proves there is *no hell*, it proves also there is *no heaven*!

Let the plain, honest state of the case be admitted. The valley of Hinnom was, in the mind of a pious Jew, a place of the utmost vileness and abhorrence. It was a place of extreme pollution both physical and moral. It was the receptacle of the filth of the city, dead carcasses and every loathsome thing. But most abhorrent of all, and ever remembered with execration, was the worship of Moloch once practised there, in whose horrid rites children were committed alive to the flames in sacrifice. It was the most revolting form of idolatry, an outrage upon the purest, holiest instincts of humanity. *Gehenna* was therefore the worst place of which a Jew could form any conception; and nothing could be more natural than the process of thought by which the name was transferred to the region of eternal perdition, the place of the damned. Instances of derivation like this abound in etymology. There is the same philological reason for applying *Γέεννα* to the place of future woe that

there is for applying *παράδεισος*, or *οὐρανός*, to a place of future blessedness.

We find it distinctly and invariably so applied in the New Testament, as the passages which have been quoted plainly show ; and every one who has not some theological or anthropological purpose to serve, some favorite system of belief or disbelief to defend, will admit it. We must therefore, in turning the Scriptures into our own language, transfer *Γέννα* in this sense, or translate it. But there is no need of transferring it : we have a word which, in sense and application corresponds, with it very precisely. The English word *hell*, in its ordinary acceptation, is the exact equivalent of *Γέννα*. So it should be translated.

So then, if the revelation made in the Holy Scriptures of the future final state of men is to be received as faithful and true, *there is a hell*, a place of exile "from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might," a place of "outer darkness," outside, as it seems, of the organized universe, and beyond the range of every ray of light from God, a place therefore of "blackness of darkness," of death-shade and horror, a place of fearful retribution where justice will take its course against incorrigible transgressors, and where all the enemies of God must take up their final abode.

The distinction which has now been drawn between *Gehenna* and other words which have unfortunately been rendered "*hell*" in our common version—Sheol, Hades, Tartarus—sweeps away a host of illogical and phological objections to the orthodox view of future punishment. Such, for instance, as that found in Gen. 37 : 35 : "I will go down into Sheol to my son mourn-



ing." Obj.: "Did Jacob find consolation in the thought of meeting Joseph in the world of woe?" Ans.: No, but in that place of happy spirits in Sheol, or Hades, where Lazarus reclined upon Abraham's bosom. Similarly in Job 14 : 13. Again in Hosea 13 : 14 : "O Sheol, I will be thy destruction." Obj.: "Therefore, even if Sheol could be construed to mean a burning hell, it would not be endless : it will be destroyed." Ans.: Sheol, at the resurrection, must "give up the dead [that is, the spirits disembodied by death] that are in it," and may be destroyed as thenceforth useless. Hell still remains. And again in Rev. 20 : 14 : "And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire." Obj.: "What? hell cast into hell!" Ans.: No, Hades cast into the burning lake with other things that become useless or "that offend, and those who do iniquity," when the present order shall be finally closed, and God shall "make all things new." If we are asked to explain what is meant by the casting of death and Hades into the lake of fire, it may be replied that the theory which denies the existence of that lake stands most in need of such explanation. But the meaning seems, quite evidently, to be this : Death, whether regarded as a fiendish personality or a personification, will be banished from every other place, and confined to the region of exile and woe to which all the enemies of God will be doomed, where he will continue to exist, and exercise his power uncontrolled upon rebel outcasts capable of enduring his inflictions forever : this is what John calls "the second death." Hades, having served its primary purpose and being no longer needed, will be cast in as indestructible fuel, perhaps, for "the fire

which is eternal," or for some other wise end. This agrees with the text and context, and harmonizes with all that is revealed on the subject of eternal death. Many other objections and plausible fallacies must vanish in the same way.

#### I. HELL IS A PLACE.

It seems hardly necessary, after what has already been written, to state formally that hell is a *place*. That proposition has been anticipated: It was a necessity not merely of language, but of thought. From its essential nature we can neither speak of it nor think of it as distinct from locality. Individual existence in the abstract, without place, without objective surroundings, and external relations, is an absurdity which the mind refuses to recognize. The future lot of the wicked is not a mere comfortless or forlorn condition, an unhappy state of mind, a painful consciousness—anywhere or nowhere. It is beyond the possibility of thought to separate conditions and events from localities. Hell is not a mere abstraction any more than heaven is. It is a terrible reality. The inspired statements and representations of the place where the wicked will receive their final doom cannot be reduced to allegory, nor regarded as mere imagery, any more than those can which relate to the final blessedness of the righteous. The blessed will enter into the inheritance prepared for them in the world of light and life: the cursed must "go away into eternal punishment," in the region of "outer darkness" and the realm of death.

We have not, it is true, a revelation so full and distinct of the state of punishment as we have of the state

of blessedness. John, in vision, "saw heaven opened," and witnessed something of the glory of the place and the felicity of the inhabitants. But the infernal regions were never unveiled to human view. No inspired seer was ever permitted to look in upon the place and state of the damned. It seems as though the view were withheld as being too dreadful to be endured. But what is revealed is sufficient to suggest the horrors of the place, and the wretched state of those who must make their dwelling there.

(1.) It is a place of *darkness*. And darkness, even as we know it in this world, fills the soul with apprehensions of evil, often with terror and affright. In the thick darkness, even when we are not exposed to enemies, or any lurking dangers, images of horror are apt to spring up to our view. We are prone to think of murderers and beasts of prey, and their bloody, mangled victims, of hideous spectres and ghosts of the dead. Few perhaps can maintain entire composure amid the darkness of the night. And query : are not these images, thus mirrored in the imagination by the darkness of this world, representative of real horrors in the black eternal midnight of the dreary waste of woe ? Will not the victims of violence, and crime, and wrong, those who were deceived, or lured, or violently hurried away to their ruin, stalk through the gloom in ghastly forms to horrify the guilty perpetrators of deeds of inhumanity and wrong ? The darkness of the dungeon is the severest punishment on earth for crime. Few constitutions can endure it long. The criminal so immured becomes a maniac, and generally languishes and dies. But the darkness which inspiration leads us to contemplate as pertaining to the

region of despair finds but feeble representation on earth, even in its deepest dungeons and caverns. The strongest, most suggestive phrasology is employed to convey some idea of it. It is "outer darkness," "blackness of darkness," such darkness as must be consequent upon infinite separation from God the only source of light. Job, in his severe affliction, yielding for the moment to despair, and regarding himself as forsaken of God and doomed to exile in the region of eternal death, thus describes the place and state: "the land of darkness and of death-shade; a land of gloom like the thick darkness, of death-shade without order; and the light is as darkness." (Job 10: 21, 22.) Such cumulative forms of expression suggest a depth of darkness for which human speech has no adequate symbols, darkness beyond all degree, in a place outside of the whole realm and range of light, whither no ray ever did, or ever will, penetrate, a blacker gloom than is possible in this state of being. We must conceive of something more than the mere absence of light. It is "darkness visible," tangible, absolute, a real, pervasive, overwhelming ocean of rayless night.

(2.) It is a place of *destruction and perdition*. But the work of destruction, which is limited by the nature of things here, has no limitation there. Destruction, as known to us in this world, is a process which reduces things to their primitive elements, and then has an end. But not so in that dread realm of ruin and death. Destruction, as it prevails there, is continuous and perpetual. It exerts its power upon objects which are incapable of dissolution. It is "eternal destruction," such an endless process of ruin as pertains solely to the condi-

tions and æons of the eternal state. It is endless and intense, the agencies and elements of dissolution operating without diminution of energy, and without consuming the victim, perpetually, destruction preying forever on the indestructible, perdition interminable. It is "destruction coming as a whirlwind," ever renewed in ceaseless circles of unabated violence. (Prov 1 : 27; and see context.) It is that which was a terror to Job, "destruction from God." (31 : 23.) It is "eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." (2 Thess. 1 : 9.) See Rom. 9 : 22 ; 1 Tim. 6 : 9 ; Heb. 10 : 39 ; 2 Peter 3 : 7 ; Rev. 17 : 8, 11, and many other passages. From this head it is justly inferred that

(3.) It is a place of *chaotic disorder and confusion*. Order manifests the presence of God and the exercise of his power for the benefit of objects of his mercy. But the place we are contemplating is the scene of exile from God, whither his irreconcilable enemies are driven away, as "vessels of wrath," from his benignant presence, and where there is no beneficent exercise of his power, except as a standing exhibition, by contrast, "of the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy." (Rom. 9 : 23.) We must infer therefore that hell is not a *κόσμος*, not a *world* in the proper sense of a system of order and adaptation. There is no harmony or congruency there: rather disorder, derangement, incongruity, the warring of heterogeneous elements and belligerent natures ; such a state of things as must result from the constant, universal, progressive work of destruction and perdition ; every thing in isolation yet in hostile contact ; no affinities, no combinations, no unions ; dis-

cord, strife, conflict, everywhere. We may think of the original state of chaos, the *thohu vabohu*, in which the earth existed before creative power had pronounced the first fiat of order, "Let there be light," and "God had divided the light from the darkness," (Gen. 1 : 3.) "The first condition of the earth," says Lange, was *תְּהוֹם*, *thehom*, wave, stormflood, ocean, abyss; and over this roaring flood lay the darkness spread abroad." In his translation he has "*öden wüst und wüsten öd*," desert waste and waste desert. It was "*rudis indigestaque moles*," a scene of utter desolation and confusion, the elements of matter massed together without form, order, or law. Such a chaotic condition of the elementary matter of our world, as far as we can get an idea of it, may help our conceptions of the place of the lost. But in all our comparisons and illustrations we must avoid materialistic notions. We must bear in mind continually that we are comparing the temporal with the eternal, material shadows with spiritual realities. The dreary desolate waste and confusion which we seek to contemplate corresponds to the nature of fallen angels for whom it was prepared. It is not an earthly but an infernal chaos, a region of unmitigated dreariness and forlornness and despair.

(4.) It is a place of *fire*. Not all the bold sophisms of false teachers who "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction" and to the ruin of others, preaching the serpent's doctrine, "thou shalt not surely die," not all the studied ingenuity of sapient allegorists, not all the scoffs and jeers of the infidel and the ungodly, not all these combined to "hold back the truth in unrighteousness," can nullify or set aside this plainly revealed fact.

The Word of God is plain and direct on this subject. (See the passages already quoted, pp. 285-288.) None of these are parts of a pictorial representation. They are not spoken in metaphor or allegory. They are positive statements in language simple and explicit. "Depart, ye cursed, into the eternal fire" is the fiat of doom to all who stand on the left hand of the Judge. To this all the other passages correspond: and John, with a comprehensive specification of representative characters to whom the doom applies, describes the place of their punishment as "the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." (Rev. 21 : 8.) These and other declarations are too plain to admit of honest unbiased controversy. It cannot be denied that such language asserts the agency of fire in the punishment of condemned sinners.

But, queries an objector, "Can a soul suffer from material fire?" Perhaps not. Who will assume to know? Has any one tried or witnessed the experiment? But the objection misstates the case in two important particulars. It is not a soul alone; it is soul and body reunited, the whole being restored after the resurrection. Neither is it material fire. It is "the fire which is eternal." The scene is not laid in time; it is laid in eternity: not in the present, but in the future, final state: not on earth, but in hell. Has the objector a sufficient knowledge of the elements, and organisms, and conditions, and relations of the invisible state and of "eternal things," and of the fire of hell in particular, to enable him to decide that it cannot affect the creature man in his reconstructed state after the resurrection? If we may trust the words of Dives, wrung from him in the place of wicked spirits in Hades, "I am tormented

in this flame," there is a species of fire there which can torment an unbodied soul : and who will take upon himself to say that the same element, in the same or some similar possible form, is not adapted as an instrument of infliction to the final state of reëmbodiment ?

It is well for us, before we venture upon broad positive assertions, or settle upon hazardous opinions, which involve our eternal interests, to be reminded that the horizon of our knowledge does not take in God's universal empire. Our philosophy may not be applicable to all possible, or even actual elementary conditions, combinations, and states of being. We do not know every thing in heaven, earth, and hell. The burning element in the infernal lake may not be subject to the physical laws which constitute the basis of our philosophy. Even in physical nature the phenomena of combustion seem almost to indicate the operation of different elements on different substances. The flame of wood, the ignition of various metals, the electric flash, the lurid glare and dense smoke of the volcanic lake, manifest the action of very different laws. But suppose this is attributable entirely to the different kinds of matter acted upon : this does not invalidate the argument. It carries with it the very point in question. Such adaptation of action, whether of one or several elements, to different objects may extend to the immaterial as well as the material, to the future as well as the present state.

Moreover, sacred history has put on record a variety of instances of supernatural fire, or the supernatural action of it. Consider the following : " The fire out of heaven " which Jehovah rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah, an example, as Jude says, of " the vengeance



of eternal fire" [It was not therefore the *material*, but the *eternal* element which fell upon and destroyed the cities of the plain—a miraculous example of divine judgment] (Gen. 19 : 24) ; the " fire mingled with hail which ran along the ground," one of the plagues of Egypt (Ex. 9 : 23, 24) ; the burning bush in which God appeared to Moses (Ex. 3 : 2) ; the pillar of fire which led Israel in their marches (Ex. 13 : 21, 22) ; the terrible display on Mount Sinai, when " Jehovah descended upon it in fire, and the mountain burned with fire unto the midst of heaven, with darkness, clouds, and thick darkness" (Ex. 19 : 18 ; Deut. 4 : 11) ; the sacred fire which was " ever burning upon the altar," and which only might be employed in the sacrifices (Lev. 6 : 13) ; the " fire that went out from Jehovah and devoured Nadab and Abihu" (Lev. 10 : 2) ; the fire which " rose up out of the rock" at the touch of the angel's staff and consumed Gideon's offering (Judges. 6 : 21) ; " the fire of Jehovah" which fell upon Elijah's sacrifice " and consumed the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." (1 Kings 18 : 38,) etc., etc.

With such examples before us, it is the part of prudence and discretion to be a little distrustful of the deductions of our philosophy, and not be quite positive that fire, in some unknown elementary state or mode of action, cannot serve as an instrument of punishment in the region of the damned.

And here let it be observed, more particularly, that the inspired phraseology employed on this subject shows clearly that the fire of final retribution is of a nature peculiar and distinct, a separate species. It is distin-

guished by the article and descriptive epithets from every other kind of fire. It is described as τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, the fire which is eternal; τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἄσβεστον, the fire which is unquenchable; τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον, τὸ ἡτοιμασμένον τῷ διαβόλῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀγγέλοις αὐτοῦ, the fire which is eternal, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. (See p. 279.) These descriptive phrases give meaning and force to other definite forms of expression: ἡ γέεννα τοῦ πυρός, the Gehenna of the fire; ἡ κάμινος τοῦ πυρός, the furnace of the fire; ἡ λίμνη τοῦ πυρός, the lake of the fire.

These expressions, which are repeated several times, and which are applied exclusively to the state of the lost, cannot be regarded as accidental. They have a meaning designedly specific. They designate an element of distinctive character, which belongs to another sphere of existence, and which, at least as an instrument of pain, is to spiritual and eternal what material fire is to natural and temporal being. What other purposes it may serve belongs not to our present subject to inquire; but that it will be an instrument of penal infliction in the region of woe is clearly revealed.

But, says some one (whose faith has far outgrown the antiquated New Testament orthodoxy, and the chief merit of whose creed is that it causes no alarm, and gives no offense, to the ungodly), "are we to believe the absurd dogma that there is 'a lake burning with fire and brimstone' to which some of our race will be doomed?" And this is often said with a grimace of holy horror, or perhaps a smirk of complacent merriment. For answer, read the 19th, and 20th, and 21st chapters of Revela-

tion. These Scriptures tell us plainly of such a place, to which, in human speech, the term *lake* is applied, and that to be cast into it and suffer its torments is "the second death." Brand it not then as a dogma of obsolete orthodoxy. Is there any new revelation on this subject to correct the old one?

What though we cannot comprehend it fully? Shall we, for that reason, reject it, or treat it as a myth? We are surrounded with mysteries incomprehensible in our own world: and can we expect to have what pertains to the future eternal state brought fully within our comprehension? That whole state of being lies outside of the sphere of our experience, and beyond the range of our observation. What we know of it we know solely from revelation. But for this purpose terms of human language are employed; and we have the analogy of terrestrial things to help our conceptions. The language is plain, and doubtless as literal as such a subject will admit. In the light of these analogies, it is our business to "read and understand," though we cannot fully comprehend.

Our conceptions may be aided by recurring again to the inspired description of chaos as represented in an early stage of the earth's formation, before creative Energy had begun the work of order. "The earth was waste and empty, and darkness was over the face of the abyss." Here, the whole mass of matter, in a fluid, or nearly fluid state, by heat, a shapeless aggregate of spontaneous combustion, is called *the hom*, *the abyss*, and represented as enveloped in darkness. In the next clause the same semi-fluid, seething, surging mass is called "the waters." There is here pictured to our view the

molten chaotic material of an unformed world shrouded in the thick gloom of its own disorder. Such—but we must still bear in mind that we are comparing different grades and modes and conditions of existence, the temporal with the eternal, the terrestrial with the infernal—such, or analogous to this, may be the condition of that region, or a part of that region of woe, that place of “outer darkness,” and “eternal fire,” which the word of inspiration has designated “the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” To a spectator standing near the verge of the universe of order, and looking out upon the dreary chaotic abyss beyond, the appearance would probably be that of a dusky lake of fire seen at intervals through opening rifts and chasms in the thick superincumbent darkness. Jets of sulphurous flame leaping upward and playing along its lurid surface, and zigzag lightning flashing through massive clouds of primeval night, would only make the blackness of the darkness more visible, and intensify the horrid gloom. And this is not a mere flight of fancy. It is little more than a combination of facts separately but distinctly revealed : “the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone,” located in the place of “outer darkness,” beyond the range of order or system, shrouded in “the blackness of darkness,” and whose “smoke ascendeth forever and ever.”

But suppose neither our philosophy nor our imagination can so follow out the clews given by inspiration as to arrive at the complete idea and comprehend all the circumstances ; suppose we encounter difficulties which our finite powers cannot solve from our terrestrial standpoint ; is it not becomingly modest as well as reverential to take God at his word when he says there is a place of

eternal fire to which the incorrigibly wicked will be doomed? Those who make "a burning hell" a subject of jest and derision expose their own shallowness and audacity, while by their impious raillery they decoy souls to perdition. There is fearful warning for them in the words of the Saviour: "Woe unto you that laugh now; for ye shall mourn and weep." They may learn from the bitterness of experience, in the place where "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth," what they refuse to learn from the plain declarations of God's Word.

In that dreadful region of dark and fiery chaos lost sinners, the condemned of Adam's race, must take up their final abode. They will not be the legitimate occupants even of that place of woe. It was not prepared for them: it was prepared for Satan and his host of rebel angels. But they pressed their way thither, "despising the riches of the goodness and forbearance and long-suffering of God," who showed constantly, by the admonitions of conscience, by the impressions of his Spirit, and by the ways of his providence, that "he would not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." A life of sin and impenitency, whether with or without a revealed law, and especially the rejection of Christ, unfits men for any other place or associations, and must necessarily bring them there.

## 2. ASSOCIATIONS AND RELATIONS.

There—if any thing which may properly be called association can subsist in such a state—they will be the associates of demons and foul spirits, the utterly wicked and vile. All the enemies of God will be there, subject to none of the restraints which may have controlled their

propensities in a former state. If there be any check, it will be no longer in the virtues, but in the possibilities of their being.

It is difficult to imagine what relations the wretched denizens of that realm of death will sustain to each other. Every one will be absorbed in his own miseries too much to have room for any care or thought for others. But even if there could be some occasional intermission of suffering, there will remain in those judicially hardened and abandoned bosoms no sentiment of fellow-feeling, no kindly emotion, or generous impulse, to form a bond of union or dictate a friendly word or beneficent office. Love, friendship, sympathy, all the tender and benevolent affections and passions which constitute the cement of society and the tie of union between individuals, will be utterly wanting. Instead of them the malevolent passions will bear uncontrolled sway. Hatred, enmity, scorn, malignity, will rule in every breast. "Haters of God," they will be "hateful to, and hating, one another." The character formed by habitual sin will be seen in its real deformity; and lost sinners thus exposed will be hideous and odious to each other. This of itself, this confirmed and habitual ascendancy of the worst passions of the soul, both in the breasts of individuals and in their mutual relations and conduct, would constitute a state of unmitigated torment; and the complete outward exhibition of such a character must present an object of unmingled disgust and abhorrence. This full development and open manifestation of hideous moral deformity and pollution, so offensive to every perception of a pure and holy being, will be sufficient alone to cancel former attachments and

satisfy the saints in heaven with the doom of ungodly kindred and friends of the former state. And so every bond of affection will be sundered, and those wretched exiles will no longer hold a place of interest in any heart.

Think what society must be when made up solely of the vicious and the vile, of felons and outcasts, in which there is no example of virtue or motive to a virtuous act, nor any restraint of law. Society could not exist in such a state : it would not be society, but social antagonism. And yet to think of such dissocial elements as these, held in compulsory contact and therefore in necessary conflict, seems to be the only possible conception of the relations of the damned. A state of existence in which every one is, and knows he is, an object of scorn, and disgust, and hate to every other one ! And, moreover, even if it were possible for some kindly disposition, some touch of fellow-feeling, to intervene between, or among them, they could do each other no good, they could afford each other no relief. They are in a state of unalterable doom. Their destinies are irreversibly settled and sealed. No deliverance or relief can ever come to them. But this supposition is only hypothetical : no humane emotion will ever find place in any bosom there.

### 3. EMPLOYMENTS.

We can hardly think of employment in such a state of disorder and wretchedness. Employment indicates order, social organization and confidence and security, at least in some degree. And, moreover, employment is associated with the idea of acquisition, and possession, and benevolence, and the supply of wants, and is therefore a source of contentment and enjoyment. None of

these can have place in that region of anarchy and despair. On this subject thought and expression can be only negative.

There will be no worship there, no service of God, no recurring day of rest, no refreshing exercise for the troubled, anguished spirit, no pleasant service or exercise for body or mind.

In that dark realm of deep despair  
No Sabbath's heavenly light will rise,  
No one to God address a prayer,  
Or heavenward lift imploring eyes.

There will be no voice of prayer, no hymn of praise, no confession or thanksgiving. Not even the songs of drunkenness and ribaldry will be heard there. There will be neither heart nor harmony of soul to sing. Rather, if any sound breaks the sullen silence, it will be the voice of cursing and blasphemy, hoarse tones of discord and groans of pain, "weeping, wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

There will be no pursuit of knowledge, no acquisition, no occupation, no diversion, no relief, no hope, but one continuous monotony of pain and woe.

#### 4. MEMORIES AND REFLECTIONS.

Thus there will be nothing to divert them from their own poignant memories and bitter reflections. The consciousness of personal identity will not be lost in hell any more than in the place of torment in Hades where Dives lifted up his eyes. If it were, the ends of justice would fail. Every one will be fully sensible that he himself committed the sins for which he suffers. Memory will unroll its record and prove a perpetual tormentor.



There will be found recorded, and displayed to view, every sin committed, every deed of cruelty, and inhumanity, and fraud, and lust, with all the attendant circumstances, every opportunity misimproved, every privilege neglected, every mercy abused, every gospel invitation slighted, every warning disregarded, every expostulation unheeded, every guilty act unconfessed, unrepented of, and therefore unpardoned. Regret, sorrow, grief, remorse (if indeed that feeling can have place in a lost soul) all unavailing, will fill the soul with ceaseless anguish. The knave, the seducer, the murderer will be constantly reminded of the victims of their perfidy and violence and wrong. Former companions in guilt and crime will meet and reproach each other. Enticers and leaders in the ways of sinful pleasure and reckless indulgence will meet those whom they lured to ruin, and hear their bitter upbraidings. Every remembrance, however awakened, of former relations and conduct will be a source of painful reflections.

#### 5. APPETITES, DESIRES, PASSIONS.

These, strengthened and intensified by indulgence and incitement, never subjected to virtuous discipline or restraint, grown exorbitant, insatiable, will clamor for gratification, and maintain a constant warfare in the distracted soul. Deprived of every means and opportunity of the indulgence they crave, incapacitated by fatal necessity for the possession or enjoyment of their peculiar objects, those turbulent elements of the carnal nature, resuscitated from the first stroke of death, will become instruments of unremitting and unmitigated torment. What must be the state of a soul rent by fierce contending

passions, preyed upon by raging insatiate appetites and lusts, without any possibility of satisfaction or alleviation? This, probably, is what is meant by the figurative language of the Psalmist uttered in the name of the Lord: "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." (Psalms 50 : 22.) See previous context, and Hos. 13 : 8. A fearful representation of final judicial abandonment to the rage of fierce tumultuous passions and lawless desires! It must be more than a realization of the fabled sufferings of Prometheus, his liver devoured by a ravenous eagle during the day, and restored every night. Most wretched state from this internal agony alone, even if there were no external infliction! It remains to consider

#### 6. THE DURATION OF THIS STATE OF PUNISHMENT.

We understand it to be the *final* state. It is everywhere so represented in the Scriptures. We have no intimation from any source of another state beyond it. Either therefore the wicked must continue in that state, or they must be annihilated. Any deliverance would bring a change; and any change or transition involves the absurdity of a state subsequent to the final! Indeed, even annihilation, being, as far as conceivable, a change of state, involves that absurdity. But annihilation is alike unphilosophical and unscriptural. Neither observation nor revelation brings any such fact, or suggests any such idea, to the mind. It is, moreover, opposed to our deepest intuitions. The mind utterly refuses, from its very nature and constitution, to entertain any such idea. There is no such negative fact in

matter, mind, or spirit, known or knowable, as annihilation. If there is any such possibility, it lies beyond the confines of rational philosophy, beyond the range of definite thought. The elements of things are everlasting; and any change of combination or relations produces a new state—which in, this case, would come after the final state!

The Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana, or Nigban, is an insult offered to the common sense and religious consciousness of humanity. Nihilism is an outrage upon the deepest intuitions, the loftiest, holiest aspirations of the soul. Buddhism is, for this reason, the darkest, dreariest, most degrading and revolting form of paganism. It is virtually a systematic conspiracy against the essential nature of man, an effort to crush out his innate love of life and longing for immortality. It rejects nature as well as God, and reduces man to a level with the animals, and even with the clods, that surround him. But it has never secured the real faith of its professed votaries. They have given it a blind assent; but, as Max Müller remarks, "Human nature could not be changed. Out of the very nothing it made a new paradise; and Buddha's Nirvana was changed into an Elysian field." Doubtless it was so imaged all the while in the mind of the votary. See "*Chips from Germ. Workshop*," vol. i. pp. 230, 251.

The teaching of the Holy Scriptures on this part of our subject has been largely anticipated. It is only necessary here to recall a few passages. Others will be remembered as cited under previous heads; and their bearing upon this point will be readily perceived. The words of the Judge in pronouncing the doom of the

wicked are distinct and decisive on this point : " Depart, ye cursed, into the fire which is *eternal*," and " these shall go away into *eternal* punishment." But, besides this, we have the cumulative utterances of Jesus declaring the doom of incorrigible offenders : " to be cast into hell, into the hell of the fire, into the fire that is eternal, into the fire that is unquenchable." (Matt. 5 : 29, 30 ; 18 : 9 ; Mark 9 : 43, 45, 47, et al.) Mark the coincidence of these passages as descriptive of the place and duration of punishment. They describe hell as the place of the fire which is eternal, unquenchable, into which, in execution of the sentence of the Judge, the wicked must go away to suffer eternal punishment. It would make these attributives utterly irrelevant to confine them, as some have done, simply to the duration or nature of the fire. They must relate to the continuance of condemned sinners in that place and state. It would be a matter of no concern to them how long, or how intensely, the fire should burn, or any instrument of infliction should operate, after they were reduced to non-existence, nor how long the place of punishment should continue to exist after they were released from it. But, moreover, the doom pronounced expressly is " eternal punishment ;" and the three passages last quoted have an addition directly to this point : " Where their worm dieth not [conscious being will never be extinguished, nor the writhing of pain cease] and the fire is not quenched." In the same sense Jude speaks of the supernatural destruction of " Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them [the vile inhabitants of course] as set forth for an example of the vengeance of eternal fire." In this case, to give a conspicuous example in kind of the final retri-

bution which will fall upon the ungodly, the execution of judgment by "the fire which is eternal" began on earth. But it was not finished here. To suit the text to the context, which refers to "the judgment of the great day," the word "eternal" must be understood as denoting not only the nature of the fire, but also the duration of the punishment thus exemplarily begun. It was begun here, to be continued, in execution of the judgment of the great day, forever hereafter. Jude speaks also of "ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into wantonness etc., as wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever." Perverting the grace of God, and resisting the attraction of the Saviour's love, they will be hurled from their proper orbit in the region of light and life and order into the dreary chaos of outer darkness and eternal death-shade. (See also 2 Peter 2 : 17.) Paul is equally explicit : "Those who know not God, and those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, shall meet the demand of justice (*δίκην ἑρτίσουσιν*), eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might." (2 Thess. 1 : 9.) So also "the smoke of the torment of those who worship the beast and his image," and "the smoke of the burning" of the mystic Babylon, "the great harlot who corrupted the earth" (that is, of those who lent themselves as instruments and creatures of her abominations) "goes up forever and ever." (Rev. 14 : 9 ; 18 : 18 ; 19 : 2, 3.) "Some will awake to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. 12 : 2.) The prophet inquires, "Who among us will dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isa. 33 : 14.) Vain question if none will dwell there ! Doubly vain if there were no such place !!

These Scriptures are plain and conclusive. As they stand translated into honest English, it cannot be denied that they teach "*eternal* punishment." These are the words of the sentence pronounced by the final Judge himself ; and to these all the other passages correspond. If then these translations are true to the inspired originals, there can be no question about duration. The punishment of the wicked will be endless.

But the translation, "eternal, everlasting," is called in question—though no one offers a better one. We have plenty of expositions and dissertations on the original words combating this obvious sense, but no correspondent translating term, suiting such learned criticisms, seems to be afforded by our language. It is asserted, very positively, that *αἰών*, *αἰώνιος*, designate a limited period of time, never endless duration. But these words—the adjective especially—are used to express the duration of the future life and happiness of the righteous, as well as of the punishment of the wicked. It is so in the coordinate clauses of Matthew 25 :46 : "These shall go away into eternal (*αἰώνιος*) punishment, but the righteous into eternal (*αἰώνιος*) life." It is applied to the future life of the saved in many other instances. As before remarked, *ζωὴ αἰώνιος*, "life eternal," is a common expression in the New Testament for the whole of the felicitous state of the redeemed.

Augustine met this cavil on the meaning of the original words long ago, arguing that since punishment and life are set in contrast, and both are alike described as *αἰώνιος*, *eternal*, the term must necessarily mean either that both are of limited duration or that both are endless. To say that "eternal life" will have no end, but

"eternal punishment" will have an end, is absurd. His words are, "Si utrumque æternum, prefecto aut utrumque cum fine diuturnum, aut utrumque sine fine perpetuum, debet intelligi. Paria enim relata sunt; hinc supplicium æternum, inde vita æterna. Dicere autem in hoc uno eodemque sensu, vita æterna sine fine erit, supplicium æternum finem habebit multum absurdum est. Unde quia vita æterna sanctorum sine fine erit; supplicium quoque æternum quibus erit, finem procul dubio non habebit." (De Civ. Dei XXI. 23.)

This was written in refutation of Origen's view, who held, among his other heresies, to the final salvation of all, including the devil and his angels. Origen had a few followers who adopted his views on this subject. But the Fathers with few exceptions, agreed with Augustine. Familiar as they were with Greek—and to many of them it was the vernacular tongue—they nearly all held to the endlessness of future punishment.

But furthermore : The same adjective is applied to God to express his eternal nature and existence : "according to the commandment of the eternal God." (Rom. 16 : 26.) To the Holy Spirit as concerned in Christ's redemptive work : "who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God." (Heb. 9 : 14.) To the "salvation," and "redemption," of which Christ is the Author. (Heb. 5 : 9 ; 9 : 12.) To the "covenant" of salvation as sealed by the blood, and confirmed by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. (Heb. 13 : 20.) To the heavenly "inheritance" promised to "those who have been called." (Heb. 9 : 15.) To God's "glory in Christ Jesus." (1 Peter 5 : 10.) To "the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus

Christ." (2 Peter 1 : 11.) To the "eternal glory" of the saints. (2 Tim. 2 : 10 ; 2 Cor. 4 : 17.)

The noun *αἰών* is applied to Christ's eternal Sonship : "The Son abideth forever." (John 8 : 36 ; 12 : 34.) To "the eternal purpose of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. 3 : 11.) To the eternal "throne" of the Son of God. (Heb. 1 : 8.) To Christ's eternal priesthood. (Heb. 5 : 6 ; 6 : 20 ; 7 : 17, 21, 24, 28.) To the eternal immutability of the Son of God : "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." (Heb. 13 : 8.) To "the word of God which lives and abides forever." (1 Peter 1 : 23, 25.) To the life of God : "who liveth forever and ever." (Rev. 1 : 18 ; 4 : 9, 10 ; 10 : 6 ; 15 : 7.) Note well, these passages in Revelation express the duration of the existence of God. The word is used in the doxologies in ascribing glory, honor, dominion, blessing, etc., to God forever. (Rom. 9 : 5 ; 11 : 36 ; 16 : 27 ; 2 Cor. 11 : 31 ; Gal. 1 : 5 ; Eph. 3 : 21 ; Phil. 4 : 15 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 17 ; 6 : 16 [the adj. here] 2 Tim. 4 : 18 ; Heb. 13 : 21 ; 1 Peter 4 : 11 ; 5 : 11 ; 2 Peter 3 : 18 ; Jude 25 ; Rev. 1 : 6 ; 5 : 13 ; 7 : 21.) So in the close of the Lord's Prayer, expressing the duration of God's "kingdom and power and glory."

Thus we see that these words, *αἰών*, *αἰώνιος*, are used throughout the New Testament to express the utmost conceptions of infinite duration. In several places they are employed in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures as the equivalents of עולם in its various forms, a term which is appropriated, in the sacred utterances of revelation and prophecy, to express eternal duration in the fullest extent, often as relates both to the past and



the future, being applied to the name, throne, attributes, and existence of Jehovah. *E.g.* : אֵל עוֹלָם, *the eternal God* (Gen. 21 : 33 ; Isa. 40 : 28) ; הוּא הָעוֹלָם, *the ever-living One* (Dan. 12 : 7 ; ) יוֹשֵׁב כִּסֵּא לְעוֹלָם, *and Jehovah sits a king forever* (Psalms 29 : 10 ; ) אֵל הָאֵלִים מִלְּעוֹלָם וְעַד לְעוֹלָם, *from eternity, and to eternity, thou art God* (Psalms 90 : 2.) The conclusion is inevitable therefore that those Greek words are fairly represented in our language by " eternal, everlasting," in the common acceptance of these terms.

It is to be observed, moreover, that in this use of αἰών, and its cognate adjective, the Holy Scriptures conform to the established classic sense, "*a space or period of time, ævum, an age or generation, eternity.*" (Lid. and Scott.) The length of time, or duration, expressed in any given case, depends on the subject-matter contemplated. It may be a lifetime, a generation, the continuance of an institution, an age or period of history or in national progress ; or, in the mythological and philosophical writings, eternity. These various uses are made definite, in any given case, by the context, or the subject in hand. Now apply this to the Sacred Writings. There are two æons, or extents of duration, which are set in prominent contrast throughout the Bible, but especially in the New Testament, and to one or the other of which all conditions and events are assigned. τούτῳ τῷ αἰῶνι, καὶ τῷ μέλλοντι, *this æon, and the æon to come* (Matt. 12 : 32.) So in Mark 10 : 30 ; Luke 18 : 30, καιρός being employed to represent the present æον νῦν ἐν τῷ καιρῷ τούτῳ, οἰκίας κ. τ. λ., καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τῷ ἐρχομένῳ ζωὴν αἰώνιον, *now in this time,*

houses, etc., and *in the æon to come*, life eternal. So likewise in Luke 20 : 34, 35, οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου, the sons of *this æon* [men of this world-period and state] are set in contrast with "those counted worthy to share in *that æon*" (τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκείνου τυχεῖν), "and the resurrection which is from the dead." Similarly Luke 16 : 8, 9. So also Eph. 1 : 21 : Christ exalted above "every name that is named, not only in *this æon*, but also in *that which is to come*."

The first of these *æons* designates the lifetime of our world, sometimes called the world-period, and is therefore limited, in the future, by the termination of the present order, or state, of existence. The other, as set in antithesis to this, and applied to the future, begins when this ends, and extends to all the future without limit. This last *æon* is therefore eternal. Sometimes, in imitation of the Hebrew, it is represented by the plural, אֵימָלַץ, αἰῶνες, *æons* or *ages*. Sometimes the word is doubled, אֵימָלַץ אֵלֶּם עַד, (Dan. 7 : 18), εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων, *into the æons of æons*, or *ages of ages*. By this it must be understood that eternity, like time, is made up of definite and distinct subordinate periods, or cycles, marked by the progressive accomplishment of the purposes of Jehovah, yet all comprehended in the one sublime eternal *æon* expressed in the singular in such passages as those quoted above by ἐν τῷ μέλλοντι αἰῶνι, *in the future æon*, ἐν τῷ ἐρχομένῳ αἰῶνι, *in the coming æon*. The noun αἰὼν therefore, thus employed, signifies, on principles of strict classical usage, *eternal future duration*. The plurals add nothing to the idea of duration. They serve to amplify the

thought, and make it impressive by distinguishing numerous cycles embraced in one grand infinite series called eternity. We are led to think of eternity as an endless chain of long ages drawn out, link by link, from the mysterious future.

The same remarks apply to the adjective *αἰώνιος*, only that there is in the New Testament no such distinction in its application. It is used only in reference to the *final æon*, and therefore invariably in the sense of unlimited duration. As remarked before, however, it has the additional idea of intensity, whether applied to the condition of the saved or the lost. It designates that to which it is applied as pertaining to the eternal state, and therefore conformed to the nature and conditions of that state, whether of life or death. Whether applied to final happiness or misery, it describes it as intense and unending.

We arrive therefore at one and the same conclusion from scriptural and from classical use : these original words express endless duration, and, in that respect, are fairly represented in our language by "*forever, everlasting, eternal*," as in our versions. And there is no escaping the further conclusion that the punishment of the wicked will be intense and eternal. The same has appeared from the chapter on Life and Death ; on the Resurrection ; on the Final Judgment ; and from the whole course of investigation in this treatise.

Such then is the plain teaching of God's Holy Word. It requires a good deal of studied, trained, and practiced ingenuity in evading the force of language at once simple and explicit to draw any different conclusion from the inspired writings. It has required this in the leaders of

the heresy of limited punishment, or no punishment. The ignorant, and those who would fain enjoy the pleasures of sin here, and obtain the rewards of the righteous hereafter, are easily led to embrace a system so indulgent to the propensities of the natural heart. *Quod volunt, facile credunt.* What men desire to be true they easily believe.

It seems quite significant that the arguments most frequently adduced, and most insisted on and relied on, in favor of the final salvation of those who die impenitent and unpardoned, are drawn from sources outside of the Bible—from rationalism, or mere human philosophy, or bold infidelity, or weak sentimentalism. The apostle seems to have anticipated the case, and met it with an appropriate admonition : “ Beware lest there be any one that despoils you [“ makes you his booty,” Elliott] through philosophy and vain deception after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” (Col. 2 : 8.) “ Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world,” when it sets itself up against his distinct revelation ? (1 Cor. 1 : 20.)

But there are those who presume to sit in judgment upon the justice of God in this doom of incorrigible sinners. It is boldly pronounced “ unjust to consign offenders of every grade of guilt alike to everlasting woe. Plain principles of justice, it is said, demand a gradation of punishment.” Well, there will doubtless be a gradation of punishment adapted in some way to different degrees of guilt. Many passages of Holy Writ prove this. (Prov. 12 : 14 ; 24 : 12 ; Isa. 59 : 18 ; Psalms 62 : 12 ; Jer. 17 : 10 ; Ezek. 7 : 3, 27 ; Matt. 10 : 15 ; 11 : 22, 24 ; Luke 12 : 47, 48 ; Rom. 2 : 6 ; 1

Peter 1 : 17 ; Rev. 2 : 23 ; Parable of the Husbandmen, and of the Talents, Matt. 21 : 33 seq. ; 25 : 14 seq.) But none of these Scriptures, nor any other, indicate a gradation in time, nor present any hope of deliverance. The gradation must be in place, or intensity, or individual consciousness and susceptibility, or some unknown conditions of that outer waste of darkness and woe. Those wretched outcasts from the presence of God will be judicially abandoned to the character which they formed while favored with the opportunities of probationary mercy ; and, from the very nature of the case, their state must be as fixed and changeless as their character. Such a reprobate character has its necessary concomitants and consequences. Depravity and wretchedness are inseparable, though both may be in different degrees, to which, we readily perceive, outer circumstances and inflictions may be made to correspond. But happiness without holiness will be forever impossible ; and therefore no relief can ever come. Sin and suffering must be to the lost alike eternal.

But, it is added, " eternal punishment goes beyond the desert of any degree of wickedness." Before we assent to this it will be well to give some consideration to the nature and legitimate effects of sin, and make sure that we decide intelligently. If sin is ruinous not only to the individual sinner, but, by its contagion, to all who are exposed to it, thus tending to spread general universal ruin ; if " sin is the transgression of God's holy law," on the faithful execution of which the stability of his government, and therefore the security of all his creatures, depends ; if " sin when it is finished bringeth forth death," and all God's intelligent creatures would be

exposed to its mortal contagion unless it were banished from his kingdom forever and made an example of his holy displeasure ; if sin is so " exceedingly sinful " and malignant, and if the sinner, by persistent rebellion against God and habitual contempt of his laws, and by neglecting the opportunities and mercies of this probationary state, contracts a character of opposition to holiness, and love of sin, which is incorrigible, so that he would be forever dangerous to God's government, and to the peace and safety of his loyal subjects—if such is the malignant nature and ruinous effect of sin, and if sinners are thus inexcusable and incorrigible, who will say that it does not demand eternal punishment for its own enormity, and eternal banishment for the common good ? And all this is indeed involved in the nature and tendency of sin. In such a case, " who art thou that repliest against God ? " In the judgment of right reason, God will be justified in adjudging irreclaimable sinners to everlasting exile and woe. Every rational creature will say Amen !

But the arguments which are most commonly heard, and which are considered most effectual, to prove the salvation of the impenitent and unpardoned, are drawn from the mercy of God. It is pronounced " inconsistent with God's goodness and mercy to punish forever ! " In the first place, this is a misstatement of the case. God is not represented as actively inflicting punishment, but as judicially permitting it. He simply gives up the sinner to the end of his own chosen way, banishes him from his presence, and since he has counted himself unworthy of eternal life, leaves him to the only possible alternative—the realm of eternal death. It is true, this

dread sequel of a life of sin and impenitency is an exhibition of God's holy wrath, which nothing but sin can provoke ; but the final doom of every sinner conforms to his own deliberate, persistent choosing ; and judgment is not executed till God has displayed his mercy by "enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath." And, moreover, by thus exhibiting, in its inevitable consequences, the damnable nature of sin, and securing the redeemed forever against its contagion, and glorifying them with his Son, he will "make known his power and the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy." (Rom. 9 : 22, 23.)

In the second place, if this argument is valid against endless punishment, it is equally so against punishment in any degree, or for any length of time. It is just as much in derogation of the divine mercy that punishment be inflicted, or permitted, for one thousand or one hundred years, or any limited time, or at all, as for eternal ages. If punishment is inconsistent with mercy, a merciful sovereign cannot permit it to be inflicted in any degree nor for any period. Many Universalists accept this inevitable conclusion, and deny all future punishment. Logical consistency demands this of them all. But how must this principle effect human government ?—to which it is just as applicable as to the divine government. How can it be reconciled with God's providential government of this world, in which we often see men suffering the natural penalties of their wickedness ?\* Let it be remembered, as a principle applicable

\* Since this was written, a valuable paper, "On the Annihilation of the Wicked," from the pen of Dr. J. R. Boise, has been published in the *Standard* of Chicago, which contains the follow-

to government universally, divine as well as human, that mercy in the form of impunity to the lawless is cruelty to the faithful and obedient. It encourages rapacity and wrong, and is subversive of all order and security. Consider, moreover, that there is no system of universal salvation which stops with simply exempting or delivering the obdurate sinner from punishment : it goes farther, and bestows on him the reward of righteousness. It dictates to God's mercy not only to deliver impenitent sinners from hell (if it admit there be any) but to raise them to heaven, and give them an inheritance with the saints in light. Thus sin and holiness, transgression and obedience, are placed upon a common level !!

Again, in the third place, this argument from the mercy of God applies to the fallen angels as well as to fallen men. So far as relates to the goodness and mercy of God, there is the same inconsistency in the eternal punishment of Satan and his host of demons as in that of wicked men. And following out the argument, as in the case of men so in the case of demons punishment cannot be inflicted for any period ! The doctrine of universal restoration is involved in these conclusions. While punishment continues, be it a longer or a shorter period,

ing language forcibly apposite to this point: "A rejection of the doctrine of endless punishment might seem more rational if we had not lived in this world and witnessed both sin and penalty, and if we did not know that sin, and untold suffering as a consequence, have existed here thousands of years. To me it is a far profounder mystery that sin should be allowed at all in God's universe, than that it should be punished forever. 'Sin is a disturbing force,' says Sidney Smith, 'of whose energy we have no sufficient measure, and to whose effects we can set no limit.'"



it contravenes the divine mercy. And to be consistent, the restoration must embrace sinning angels as well as sinning men. The honor of God's mercy is as deeply involved in the deliverance and restoration of the fallen of the one race as of the other. Origen and his followers perceived and accepted this logical deduction, and held to the final restoration of Satan and his angels! And so have some more modern restorationists. Let it be noted that all the honor which accrues to God's mercy from such an exercise of it is at the expense of his justice, his righteousness, his truth, and every other attribute of his holy nature!

All such difficulties and absurdities are avoided by simply and reverentially accepting the plain declarations of God's Holy Word. Nothing is more clearly taught than the eternal punishment of those who die in impenitency. Such passages only have been quoted as teach this doctrine directly. To refer to those portions of the Sacred Volume which—by allusion to the holy character of God, to the malignant nature and inevitable consequences of sin, to the hardened depravity of the impenitent heart, to the sufferings of Christ to atone for sin and make our salvation possible, to the design and changeless results of our probation, to the purity of heaven and the perfection of the heavenly state, etc.—teach it incidentally and often more impressively, would be to cite a large part of the Bible.

#### CONCLUDING REMARKS.

It is a fearful, a painful subject to contemplate. Very naturally we could wish to avoid it, pass it by. But that would not erase it from the pages of revelation, nor

change the terrible reality. Hell would remain the same, and the exposure of unpardoned sinners to its immitigable woes would remain undiminished, though no voice were raised to tell the fearful truth or utter a word of warning. Nay, silence, or any evasion, increases the peril of fellow-beings, and is therefore, on such a subject, irreconcilable with the most sacred obligations of humanity.

The Holy Scriptures are full of warnings to sinners to "flee from the wrath to come." And they select no soft words. They speak in strong terms. They employ bold language. They do not merely warn of some indefinite indeterminable coming evil : they tell of the nature of the danger to which the ungodly are exposed, calling things by their right names. They reveal a dreadful place of punishment, a hell of eternal "fire prepared for the devil and his angels" to which the finally impenitent will be doomed "into the ages of ages." Jesus said to the proud, self-righteous, hypocritical Scribes and Pharisees, "How can ye escape the damnation of hell?" He warned sinners of their exposure "to the hell of the fire." He said even to his disciples, as an incentive to faithfulness to their solemn trust in the face of opposition and persecution, "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." To the captious unbelieving Jews he said, "Ye shall die in your sin. Whither I go ye cannot come." Hardened as they were in sin, and set in their way, they could *never* come to the place whither he was going. Whither they would go, and where they would find their place, he forewarned them in the same discourse when he said, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father ye will do." Doing

Satan's work, they would of course share his doom. And this reveals the dreadful doom of all who die in their sins : for God, " without respect of persons, judges according to each one's work." (1 Peter 1 : 17.)

How then dare any one, and especially a professed minister of Christ, directly, or by smooth words, or ambiguous expressions, or by forbearing to speak, attempt to conceal what God has thought proper to reveal? What can be gained by suppressing this part of divine revelation, even if it were possible? Shall the popular cry, " Speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits," be heeded, and the truth be kept back, in a matter which involves such momentous interests? Who that values the eternal life of souls would be willing to conceal from his fellow-creatures the peril upon which they are rushing while in the course of sin? Who would be so recreant to the sacred claims of humanity, and the solemn trusts of the Gospel, as not only to utter no word of alarm in the ears of the careless, but to endeavor to quell their fears? It is not enough to tell sinners of their sins, and proclaim to them the glad tidings of a Saviour, and exhort them to accept the offer of salvation. Every motive must be brought to bear to turn them from the ways of death and induce them to lay hold on eternal life. We must tell them plainly of the terrible consequences of sin, the fearful, inevitable ruin that will fall upon them if they continue in sin, the place and state of woe to which the finally impenitent will be eternally consigned. God has given these awful warnings in his Word, and we must repeat and enforce them. It is very easy, and may be quite satisfactory to some minds, to turn off the whole subject by saying with Chrysostom

(Hom. xxxi. Ep. ad Rom.), "It is of more importance to know how to escape hell than to know where it is, or what is its nature." Chrysostom was generally faithful, and "shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God" on this subject. This was but an incidental remark, and doubtless meant less in his mouth than similar remarks in other mouths more modern and less faithfully golden. Any such waving, or ignoring, this subject savors of lightness in regard to a matter to which God has attached the utmost importance, making it prominent throughout the Bible. Though it may not be of special importance to know where hell is, it is important, as furnishing motives to employ the means provided to escape it, to know all that is revealed of its nature. God has appealed to these motives in the revelation he has made of the place and state of the lost ; and the unfaithfulness which ignores them recklessly imperils the life of souls, and incurs a responsibility which it will be fearful to meet in the day of final reckoning.

#### GENERAL CONCLUSION.

And now a few general observations, suggested by the course of investigation which has been pursued, will bring this work to a close. The work has required more study and research than a mere perusal of its pages would probably indicate. While the labors and opinions of others, as far as available, have not been neglected, great care and deliberation have been necessary in comparing, sifting, and verifying these, and then selecting and turning to proper account whatever might serve the only legitimate purpose of inquiry, the discovery of truth. And in many instances it has been necessary to

proceed independently and adopt original views (original so far as I know) without help or clew from expositors or writers. Of the great mass which has accumulated on these subjects during the Christian centuries, the larger portion is not worth the perusal. From the speculations and opinions of men, whatever their position, learning, or pretensions, I have, in all cases, turned to the Oracles of God as the only sure ground and criterion of faith and doctrine.

The object kept constantly in view, and the ultimate object of every inquiry, has been to ascertain what the Holy Scriptures teach on the various subjects which have come under review. On such subjects it were worse than in vain, it were presumptuous, to look elsewhere, or in any other direction, for sure light. We grope in darkness, and are sure of nothing without the light of revelation. The Word of God is the only source of positive knowledge of things to come, of the eternal unseen worlds and states of being, and of the destiny which awaits our world and our race in the endless future ; and it furnishes the only key of interpretation for whatever we learn on these subjects from indirect sources. True, there is light reflected, on these as on other topics of religious concern, from the realm of nature. There is, as we have seen, a clear reflection, by similitude and analogy, from material objects around us ; but to understand and interpret these revelations of nature we must take our clew from the inspired Book. Speculation, and conjecture, and dogmatism, are alike to be avoided, as alike unbecoming the solemn gravity of the themes of discussion and the eternal interests involved. It must be our sole object to find out, and bring out, the sense and sen-

timent of Inspiration. To this end it is scarcely necessary to say that, in this as in every other subject of investigation, inferences and deductions, so they be strictly logical, are entitled to the same consideration as the premises, be they facts or principles, from which they are drawn.

No direct attention has been bestowed upon those visionary theories and fanatical notions which have prevailed to greater or less extent in successive periods, and been revived from age to age, on the speedy Second Advent of Christ—for the simple reason that they are not considered worthy of attention. All such wild speculations or calculations go beyond what is revealed. We may know, and ought to consider, the signs, as of the leafing fig-tree, and “be also ready;” but “the times or seasons it is not ours to know” definitely. But the world is not likely to be imposed upon extensively by such wild theories any more; and with those who are the easy, obstinate dupes of them, argument is of little avail. The most effective refutation is a distinct and direct presentation of inspired teaching on the subject.

On the other hand, the modern orthodoxy which makes Christ's Second Advent cotemporaneous with the general resurrection and the judgment of the great day, is compelled, as we have seen, to nullify, or mystify, the simplest plainest predictions, and declarations of the Word of God. It virtually ignores the Second Coming, erases its distinguishing features, and confounds it with the events of a later period. There is no place in this system for a millennium unless it be a somewhat improved state of Christian civilization; and this is all its advocates generally expect!

In regard to the final states, while the materialistic notions of eternal things which some speculative writers have put forth, and to which there has been, in some periods, a tendency of religious thought, have been carefully guarded against, the vain abstractions, the metaphysical, metaphorical, and allegorical inanities of modern times have been regarded and treated as equally, and even more, at variance with the plain sense and rational interpretation of the language of Scripture. While literalism in the common sensuous acceptation can have no countenance in relation to this subject, the analogies between temporal and eternal things, which are distinctly recognized in the Scriptures and made the media of revelation, conduct us to a higher, spiritual, and therefore more real and substantial, literality of the terms employed to convey to us ideas of objects and conditions in the eternal states. And there is no other intelligible medium of revelation to men.

We have seen that the whole destiny of our race, from the time the first pair were created onward into the endless future, is comprehended in three distinct modes, or states of being—the *present*, the *intermediate*, and the final or *eternal*. All subordinate conditions conform to one general constitution of the creature in each of these states ; and in the two last the character of every individual fixes his lot.

The Present state is debased by sin, and mixed of good and evil. When the appointed preparatory work is done, it will be renovated and perfected in the millennial reign. The millennium will bring about a new order of things. As that blessed dispensation advances, all violence and injustice and wrong will be suppressed.

Peace and perfect order will prevail. The knowledge of God will cover the earth, and men will not dare to resist his will. The prayer so oft repeated, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," will be answered. This world will become what it would have been if sin had never entered. Nevertheless, the millennial kingdom will not be a new state of being, but the perfection of the present state. It belongs to the earthly state of the saints.

The Intermediate state is preliminary to the final. The conditions of being are correspondent, and the character is fixed and changeless in both. The righteous and the wicked are no longer intermingled as in this world. They are separated forever, and assigned to separate regions with the great impassable gulf fixed between them. The good are happy, the bad miserable, in a far higher degree than was possible in the former state. But their powers and capacities of action and enjoyment are defective without the body. The body is essential to the completeness of our being, and therefore to our highest happiness or deepest woe. It is therefore made capable of immortality by the means and appliances which God, in the plenitude of his grace, has provided; and its resurrection, and the reunion of body, soul, and spirit are necessary to prepare us for the awards of the final state. The resurrection does more than repair the ruin of the previous work of death: it superadds capacities for immortality. Death can never again produce dissolution. Some will come forth to the resurrection of life, some to the resurrection of damnation: but body, soul, and spirit forever reunited, with all the capacities and susceptibilities of the complete being,



will, in execution of the final judgment, enter into the eternal blessedness of heaven, or depart forever into the region of outer darkness and woe.

The Eternal state follows, in pursuance of the judgment of the great day by which the final lot of all mankind is irreversibly settled and announced. It takes into its limitless range the consummation, but not the end, of human destiny. That destiny has no end. Man's conscious existence, in weal or woe, will continue forever and ever. But every one will be "fixed in an eternal state." The division made at the judgment bar will be perpetuated; and whatever progress may be made in good on the one hand, in evil on the other, the characteristic moral features described by the terms "righteous" and "wicked," with all the necessary concomitants of happiness or woe, will remain into the ages of ages. To fulfill the awards of the judgment will require the numberless ages of eternity.

From the views which have been presented it will be seen why the plural "Future states" is used in our title and elsewhere instead of the singular which has been generally used by writers on the subject. In a general sense, as including all the race, there are *two* distinct states or modes of existence beyond the grave. There is the disembodied, and there is the final resurrection state, the one before, the other after, the general judgment. In a specific sense as relating to different classes and divisions of the race, there are *five* distinct states, or subordinate conditions, after death. There are the two conditions of unbodied spirits in their separate places in Hades; there is the millennial or earthly resurrection state of those who are Christ's at his coming; and there

are the two final unalterable states of the righteous and the wicked, respectively, in their restored being after the judgment.

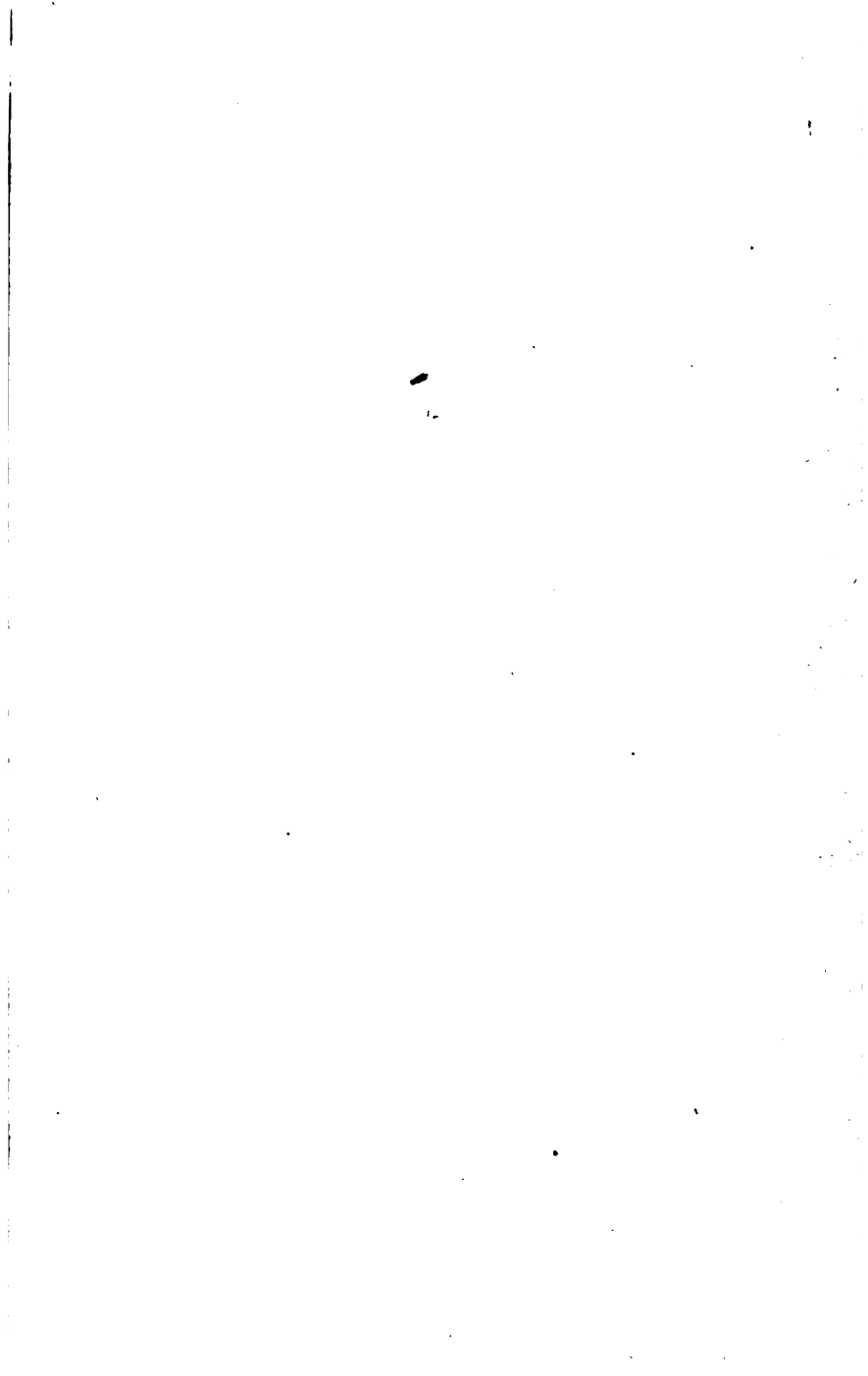
Each state is introductory to that which succeeds it : so that the germ of all our future being, through every stage of development and transformation, is imbedded in our present constitution, and springs up in our present state. It is the same being throughout ; and in every change of state the system with which it becomes associated is conformed to its new constitution. There is therefore a general analogy, beginning in the present life and world, and running through the successive states and stages of being ; and all we can know of persons or things, conditions or relations, in any future state, must necessarily be learned through the analogies afforded by this world and material things. All our ideas of a world unknown and things unseen must depend on their correspondence with this world and things seen. And this is the necessary basis of revelation to men.

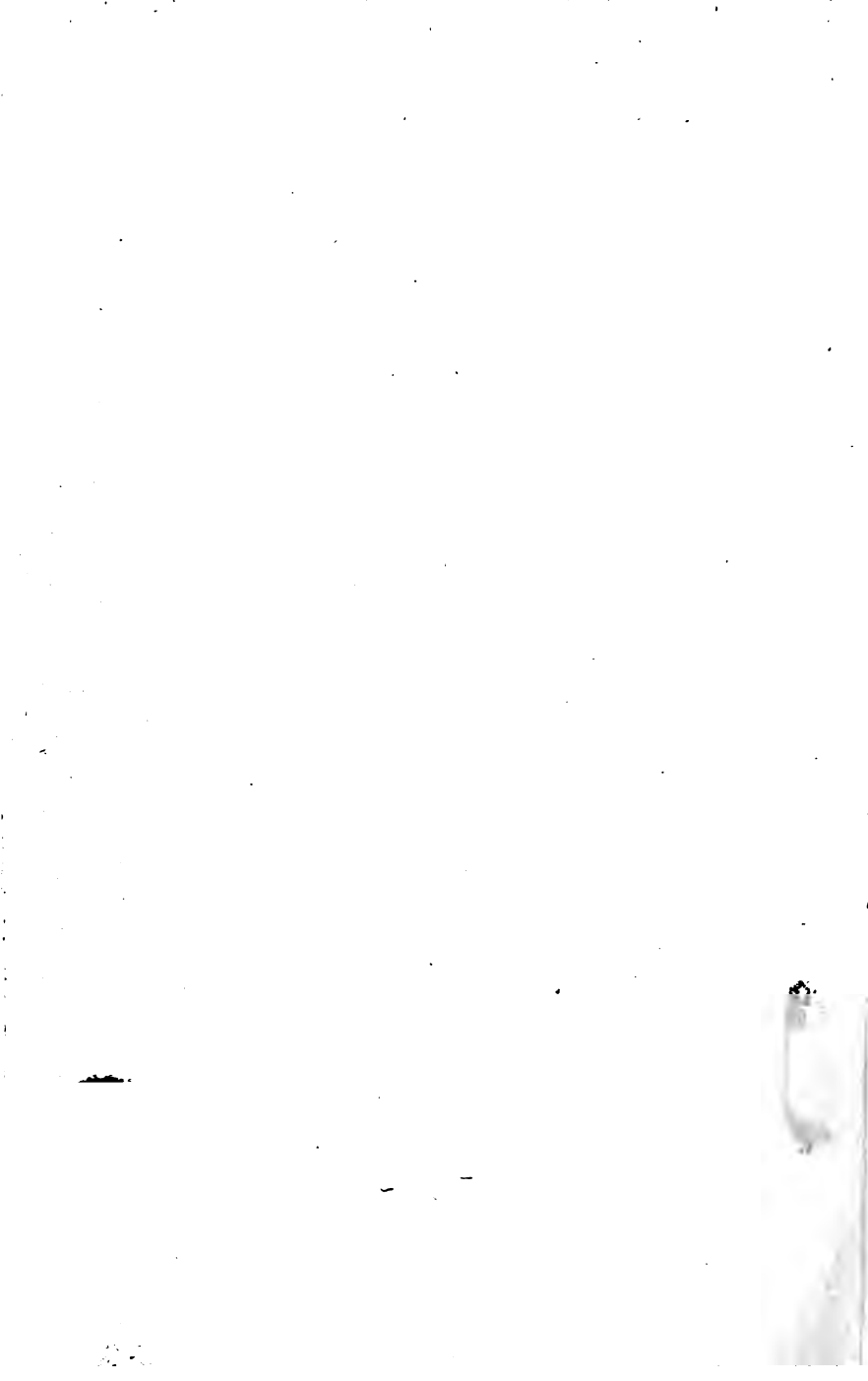
But these analogies are carried out only in the lot of the righteous. In them only are fulfilled the normal conditions of progress in life and being. Those conditions are all included in conformity to God's perfect law. Whatever proceeds from the violation of that law is abnormal, and therefore out of regular analogy. Hence, doubtless, it is that the revelation of the state of the lost is so indirect and indefinite. A state of utter abandonment to sin and its consequences, of settled enmity against God, with its necessary concomitants of disorder and ruin, must lie beyond the range of our analogies. Analogy depends upon order and legitimate sequence, and must therefore fail us in " a land of darkness with-

out order." Our knowledge of a state of ruin, chaos, and death, must necessarily be general and indefinite. Yet enough is revealed to our apprehension to make it dreadful to contemplate, and to serve every purpose of salutary warning.

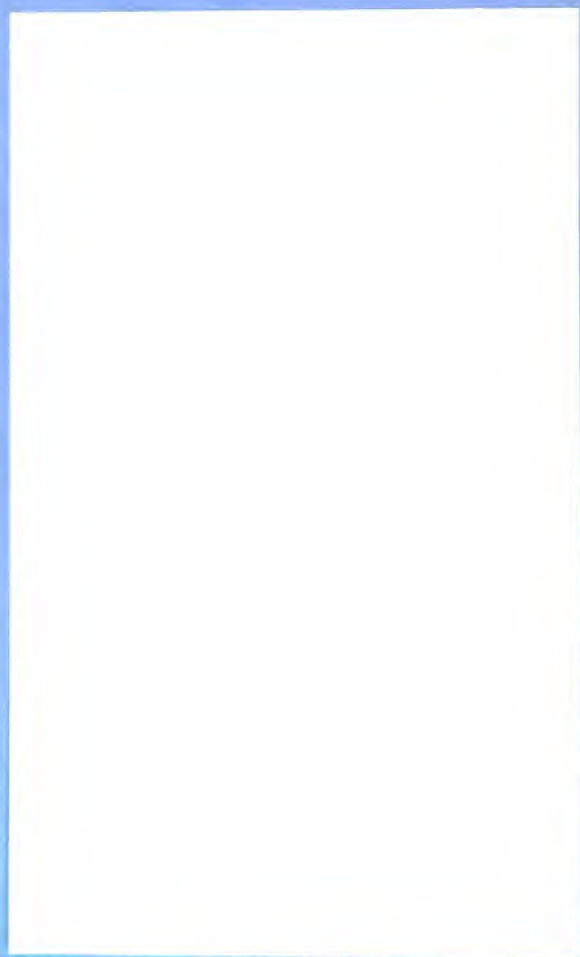
How much is comprehended in "the life and good, the death and evil, which are set before us" in the Word of God! What an existence is ours! What a destiny does our being involve! What a future is before us! A future measured by eternal ages, to be spent in bliss or in woe! How beneficent, and how glorious, the purpose of grace which provides for our redemption from death, and makes eternal life attainable! And how solemn the thought, how it ought to affect us, that all these infinite concerns and consequences are dependent on our conduct during this brief, precarious, probationary life! Though we are finite, we dwell amid infinitudes, in which all our interests and destinies will ever be involved; and the consequences of every act or movement of ours must extend *ad infinitum*!

THE END.









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